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SIXTY YEARS IN CUBA





Edwin F. Weiss

SIXTY YEARS IN CUBA

REMINISCENCES OF
EDWIN F. ATKINS



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TO MY WIFE
KATHARINE WRISLEY ATKINS
TO WHOSE COURAGE
AND UNWAVERING SUPPORT
THROUGH YEARS OF TROUBLED TIMES
MUCH OF MY SUCCESS IS DUE

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PREFACE

MY long residence in Cuba and wide acquaintance with all classes of people brought me to the attention of the Washington authorities during the period of the insurrection and the Spanish-American War. Many of them, including Richard Olney, Cleveland's Secretary of State, Senator Orville H. Platt of Connecticut, and Samuel W. McCall, who was then an influential member of the Ways and Means Committee, urged me to write down my experiences and impressions: for I had had an exceptional opportunity to know the views of both the United States and Spanish Governments through their diplomatic officers, as well as through their military and naval authorities. I have therefore been over my business and family correspondence of many years, from which I take the notes and information included in these memoirs. I have tried to record events from month to month and year to year, which would show not only the political but the economic conditions in Cuba; and I have tried, also, to show how at times political conditions in Washington, such as the long delay in ratifying the reciprocity treaty after it had been signed by the Governments of both countries, nearly brought the Island to ruin. Whether successful or not in my attempt, I ask the indulgence of the reader.



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SIXTY YEARS IN CUBA



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CHAPTER I

FIRST VISIT TO THE ISLAND

SIXTY years have passed since my first visit to Cuba, and almost as many since I entered upon my career in the sugar business established by my father in the year 1838. These years have seen such a revolution in the production and manufacture of sugar, and in all business methods, as probably, in a like term, will never be repeated. Much of this development in the production of sugar took place during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and was mainly the result of economic necessity occasioned by drastic political changes; for during that period slavery was abolished, and the Island suffered from the effects of rigid military rule, corrupt civil administration, and revolutionary attempts to throw off the domination of Spain.

On January 24, 1866, my father and I, with four friends, sailed from New York on the steamship *Eagle*, of what was then the Alexander, afterwards the Ward, Line. The journey to Havana, which now by rail and steam may be made in two and a half days, meant then a rough voyage of five, six, or even seven days. This was the first of many dreadful trips I made back and forth to Cuba; and the

smell of cooking, bilge water, engine oil, and steam from a sugar cargo on those old vessels remains in my memory to this day. Large doses of red pepper or Worcestershire sauce did little to 'stimulate digestion,' and I had ample opportunity to test the popular belief that to be thoroughly seasick once a year cleared the system and ensured health. Meals were served at long tables in the saloon, the steward and his assistant marching in at the head of two long lines of waiters, each carrying a dish from which the passengers were served in turn. 'Take it or leave it' was the rule; and as most of the passengers were sick, needless to say the cost of feeding them was not great.

We entered Havana on a beautiful January morning. The sun was rising; and other craft, which like the *Eagle* had arrived off Morro Castle after the sunset gun, were making the harbor. We passed between steep banks covered with barracks and fortifications, with here and there a palm tree that looked very strange to us. To an American Havana seemed a city of feudal times, for there had been little change in its appearance since the days of its settlement. The Moorish architecture, the many-colored red-roofed buildings, with their high unglazed windows and iron grilles, the remnant of ancient city walls, made a fascinating scene, especially for a New England boy of sixteen on a first trip away from his own country. Steamers were not allowed to go to the wharves; so after an examination by the health officer, we were landed in small

boats, and drove through narrow streets shaded by awnings stretched across from house to house to 'Mrs. Almy's.'¹

I have found among some old papers a journal of this first trip, which starts in well, but fades away before we left Havana for the south coast. It is a small leather-covered volume, with a large key labelled 'E. F. A.' drawn on the fly-leaf, presumably to warn off prying readers. There is, however, nothing personal in its comment, which shows a painstaking attention to detail and a certain relish for statistics. The chief value of my boyhood description of Havana lies in its accuracy.

Sidewalks were very narrow and seldom used, as everybody walked in the streets, which were only fifteen feet from house to house. They were cleaned every night by chain gangs made up mostly of Chinese and negroes, who were often sentenced for light offences, as the Government was glad to get their services. As the Island was under strict military rule, the city was heavily garrisoned; and Spanish soldiers in seersucker uniforms and straw hats with red cockades filled the streets, particularly in the early morning. The old Spanish houses were built around a courtyard, and were usually of only one story, with a flat roof where the family sat to enjoy the breeze. They were built of plaster and painted either green, or yellow, or blue. On one

¹ Mrs. Almy's was a famous boarding-house on the Plaza San Francisco, opposite the Franciscan Monastery which is now the Custom-House.

side was the parlor and dining-room, on another the sleeping-rooms, on a third side the kitchen, and on the fourth the stable. The dining-room was generally so placed that everything passing from the street to the courtyard, including the horses, had to go through the room. The volante, or family carriage, was always kept in the hall.

The little open shops had odd names, such as 'The Diana,' 'The Angel,' or 'The Nymph.' A visit to the market one morning quite took away our appetite. The meat was covered with dirt, and some of the men who sold it were negroes clothed only in a pair of drawers, their black skins shining with perspiration. The poultry was alive, tied by the legs, and piled in heaps. We watched one woman as she bought her supplies: she took some lettuce, a hen, a couple of eggs, and various other things, and putting them in her basket, including the hen, shut the cover down and walked off.

In the evening there were military concerts on the Plaza de Armas, where chairs could be hired for five cents. The drive was thronged with private volantes; the negro calesero, in high boots and heavy silver spurs, perched on a silver-mounted saddle on the near horse, which was half a length ahead of the shaft horse. The body of the volante was similar to a chaise, and I found the length to be twenty-five feet from the head of the second horse to the tire of the wheels, which were six feet in diameter and reached above the heads of the passengers. The whole made a turn-out that was much



E. F. A. AS YOUNG BOY



admired, and generally carried two — the husband and wife, and sometimes on a little seat in front of them a daughter, the Rosita, or Rosebud. The men wore white suits and expensive panama hats, the ladies black or white mantillas of fine Spanish lace. Hats or bonnets were unknown.

At the great Tacon Theatre we saw a performance by the Grau Opera Company, which had come down on the steamer with us. This theatre was built by a man named Martí, who had been at the head of a band of pirates, but, hearing that a reward was offered for him, visited the Captain-General and claimed the reward, and thereafter betrayed his men to the authorities. Martí obtained not only the reward, but a monopoly of the city fish supply and permission to build the opera house.

We also attended a bull-fight, which was considered the national sport, although it might have divided the honor with cock-fights, for both bull-fights and cock-fights were attended by old and young, rich and poor, aristocrat and laborer.

Thus Havana appeared to me in 1866; and, although there have been changes since then, much of my early description could stand for the Havana of to-day. Some of the streets then bore Irish names in honor of distinguished generals who had fought in the Peninsular Wars and thereafter settled in Spain. Only after the Spanish-American War were these and other old street names officially changed to those of Cuban patriots; but though their signs are changed, many of the streets are still known by

their former names. There was Obispo Street, with its ancient city gate, beyond which a new city has now been built; and Tacon Street, named for Cuba's most famous, or infamous, Captain-General. A story has it that, although the property of the Jesuits had been confiscated some sixty years before Tacon's day, their power was still great enough to win his displeasure, and he determined to seize the first occasion to humiliate them. So on one of the numerous church holidays, when business was suspended and the streets filled with church processions, he set out with his staff and a small cavalry escort and rode straight through one of the Jesuit processions, scattering the priests in all directions. But, though the Jesuits had lost their great possessions and much of their prestige, they retained a footing in the Island; and about 1850 the Government turned over to them at Havana, for their use as a mission school, a former Franciscan monastery, then used as a barracks.

Our stay in Havana lasted only a few days; and in going from Havana to Cienfuegos, we had to cross the Island to Batabano on the south coast. The distance is only thirty miles, but it meant a four or five hours' journey by rail. From Batabano there was a weekly or semi-weekly boat service to all ports as far as Santiago. This Menendez Line was extremely profitable to its owners, as it was the only means of transportation on the south coast and travel was heavy. The boats, built on the North River, New York, were comfortable, the table was

excellent, and everything was done for the comfort and entertainment of the patrons, even to furnishing free drinks. I remember the trip along the coast was delightful; the boat ran between the keys, and the water was a bright emerald green such as we never see in the North.

Cienfuegos was a growing place, and its principal merchants were Spaniards, who were all very kind during the week or more we spent there and did everything possible for our entertainment. I remember among the festivities a picnic breakfast in a beautiful cocoanut grove on the Damuji River, for the ostensible purpose of considering a project to be undertaken by the Government for dredging the river. Little did I think then that I was to carry out this work myself many years later; and that my father's friends and business associates who showed us so much kindness on this visit were to be my friends and associates through many troubled years.

After this first visit to Cuba, I spent the next two years in Mr. Fette's school; and then, in December, 1868, I entered my father's office, or 'counting-room' as the term was, on India Wharf.

India and Central Wharves were the headquarters of the West Indian trade, which included such houses as Benjamin Burgess & Sons, Gossler & Company, Philo Shelton, E. Atkins & Company, and many other old-time merchants. These men did a banking as well as a commission business with

Cuba by advancing money on sugar crops which were to be shipped to them. The commission at that time was five per cent upon the duty-paid selling price, and included the guaranty of the merchants for the amount of their sales. Most of the sugar and molasses was of grocery quality, and both were sold to wholesale grocers, or jobbers, in lots ranging from ten to fifty or a hundred hogsheads.

I clearly remember that my first business connection with Cienfuegos was receiving a sugar cargo shipped from there, which was landed at Rowe's Wharf. It was part of my job to go through the cargoes of molasses to note the color and to taste hundreds of hogsheads to ascertain the quality. If it was sour, it was sold to distillers instead of to grocers. Samples of sugar and molasses were displayed at brokers' offices, where they were sold largely by color. My father's broker was John L. Emmons, and his chief clerk was J. H. Shapleigh, who was afterwards my associate for many years in E. Atkins & Company. Among my duties, also, was the checking of cargoes delivered from ships and attending to their cooperage and storage. We shipped, at that time, outward cargoes of cooperage stock, and I had to tally thousands of barrel heads, hoops, and shooks into the ships' holds.

In winter I used to go to the wharf from our house in Pemberton Square at daylight, and stay until sunset. It was bitter cold on the wharf in winter and very hot in summer; but my work was interesting and I did not mind either heat or cold. I had

to go back and forth between India and Boston Wharves sometimes two or three times a day, and always on foot, as there was then no street transportation, not even a horse-car line, between these points. My lunch I usually ate at the restaurant of the New England Railroad, which was near the present site of the South Station; but on very cold days I often had twelve o'clock dinner aboard any one of my father's vessels that happened to be in port.

Another of my duties was to collect bills from the grocers to whom we sold sugar and molasses directly instead of through agents, as was done later when we worked through the refineries; and I cannot pass over the history of this period without some mention of these old wholesale grocery houses. Bills were made out at four months' time, payable with a discount of two and a half per cent at seven days. I had called often to collect from one slow-paying grocer, and each time had been told he was out. Finally I said I would wait for him, and I put in my time sampling his raisins, walnuts, and other delicacies. Soon one of the salesmen rushed into the back office, where, as I suspected, the old fellow was sitting, and told him that that boy Atkins would eat up the entire stock if he didn't pay his bill. I got the money.

The grocers, 'Cy' Robinson and Jacob Haskell among others, used to meet between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning at one or another of the brokers' offices, where they would trade and also in-

'dulse in stories and practical jokes. 'Jake' Haskell was a tall, lanky Yankee with big feet which he turned well out in walking. His firm, Haskell & Adams, occupied one of the granite stores on State Street where the sidewalk, also, was of granite. One night 'Cy' Robinson sent a stonemason to cut the print of an enormous foot just in front of Haskell's store, where it may be seen to-day.

One of the grocers owned a small share in some coastwise schooners; and once at Emmons's office he talked so much about building schooners for the trade that he wore out the patience of his hearers. 'Jake' Haskell appeared much interested, however, and after asking all sorts of questions finally said: 'Oh, I forgot to ask whether, if I decide to build a schooner, you would clapboard or shingle her.' This broke up the meeting, and for some time there was no more talk of the coastwise business.

Philo Shelton was an autocrat in the sugar trade. He used to import 'clayed' white sugar in boxes of about three hundred pounds each. One day, having landed a cargo of such sugar, he notified his customers and on his return from dinner found a number of old grocers waiting for him. Shelton took the sugar tryers and drew out a sample.

'What's your price?' asked one buyer.

'Fourteen cents.'

'Isn't that pretty high?'

'Fourteen cents is my price,' thundered Shelton, 'and if you're not damned civil you can't have it at that.'

After a couple of years as receiving clerk, I began to work on the books under the instruction of my father's partner, Mr. John Cumings, who was an expert accountant and took great pains in training me. The accounts of the firm were very long, and I remember staying at the office many a night until after ten o'clock to get the trial balance correct. It was also one of my duties to use the letter-press, which had only recently come into use, for copying letters, which had previously been done by hand. My father wrote all his correspondence with a quill pen; and in looking over those old letter-books, his letters seem to me models of condensed statement and clear expression, an art all but extinct in these days of stenographers and typewriters.

During my period of apprenticeship, my father was devoting more and more time to his railroad interests. With Oakes and Oliver Ames, Captain Ezra Baker, and other Boston merchants, he was actively engaged in building the Union Pacific Railroad; and in the capacity of vice-president, he directed the financial policies of the road. His desire to be free from frequent trips to Cuba made him hasten my training in the home office in order that I might be fitted to relieve him of the active management of the Cuban end of the business.

CHAPTER II

CIENFUEGOS IN 1869

THE year 1868 was marked by the beginning of an uprising known as the 'Ten Years' War,' an attempt of the Cubans to throw off the yoke of Spain. During this period rural properties were destroyed and the Island brought to the verge of ruin. It was in the midst of this troubled time that I began my career in Cuba.

In December, 1869, my father sent me to Cienfuegos to learn Spanish and Spanish business methods. I entered the office of Torriente Brothers, Cuban correspondents of E. Atkins & Company. During the next fifteen winters I made my home with the family of Don Ramon de la Torriente, where I was treated as a son. Don Ramon was born in Santander and educated as a priest, but he took up a commercial career. With his brother Don Estéban he established a shipping house in Cienfuegos, and gradually acquired several estates in the country roundabout. Don Ramon and my father were warm friends, and their friendship, which continued down to the time of Don Ramon's death in 1876, was such that each thought more of protecting the interest of the other than of his own.

I shall tell the story of my first winter at Cienfuegos, through the following family letters.

*From Mother*BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, *December 12, 1869*

DEAR NED:

We remained upon the wharf as long as I could discern figures upon the deck of your boat. Perhaps I imagined I saw your white signal after you had ceased to wave it. As I turned away, too full to answer Uncle Edwin in his remarks, I thought, 'Well, I can bear Ned's absence better this winter, for the words which he said, "I shall not do anything there which I would not do at home!"' Now, whenever I think of temptation assailing you, I am going to feel that you will put it all from you.

I hope, dear Ned, that you did not suffer much from seasickness. Perhaps you thought I was too scrupulous in not bringing the champagne for you. When you are forty years of age, you will understand it all very differently from what you now do, and how much danger lies in the first glass. I fully believe that tea without much milk will settle sickness at the stomach quicker than anything else; and although Uncle Edwin meant kindness towards you, it was mistaken kindness.

The weather for forty-eight hours after you left was very fine and we all hoped that you had a fine run off without much sea. To-day Father says you are off the banks of Florida enjoying warm weather while we have our usual Sunday storm. . . .

We all miss you so much and wish we could hear you come in and drum away on that fine collection of music which you have. I intend to write you by every steamer.

Yours affectionately

MOTHER

HAVANA, *December 16, 1869*

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER AND SISTERS:

... The voyage seemed about a month long, but the steward was very attentive and by eating and reading 'Martin Chuzzlewit' I managed to get through with it. ... Late Tuesday night we arrived off the Morro and had to wait until sunrise to go in. Havana looks as quaint as ever, and is the same as when I was here before except that it is overflowing with soldiers. As we entered the harbor we passed a steamer, just arrived from Spain, with twelve hundred Catalonian volunteers. The harbor is full of Spanish men-of-war and has quite a formidable appearance. After a delay of three hours, waiting for a permit to land from the Captain-General, we went ashore; at the Custom-House they searched all our baggage, and then took each one into a little room and felt in all our pockets, poked us in the ribs, etc. After reading all the letters we had, they let us go. I came directly to Mrs. Almy's and she remembered me and gave me one of her best rooms overlooking the water, where there is always a nice breeze. Directly under my window there are a lot of marines quartered, and yesterday they had a band of music there and seemed to be having a celebration of some kind. They had an arch up, trimmed with a palm leaf on each side and the inscription 'to the volunteers of Santander, the Spanish Navy.' The men were dressed in white with blue caps on, and some of them were dancing a Spanish dance. The whole city is trimmed with flags, and a palm leaf on the side of a great many stores. Everything is quiet here and there is no trouble for an American to go wherever he wishes. My roommate, Mr. Morrill, one of the gentlemen that Uncle Edwin introduced me to on board the boat, I find very pleasant. He speaks Spanish perfectly and is well acquainted here. He has taken me around and

introduced me to a great ^{ENFUEGOS, December 21, 1869}
 line that it was pleasant for
 write anything interesting ^{at} this city without being
 as it is an old story to you ^{was} fortunate in meeting
 half as nice as Boston in ^I seen a pleasanter man
 weather be compared to a ^I left Havana at the same
 Neither would I prefer a ^{The} night before I left I
 of volantes and the best ^{at} to have it searched and
 Brighton Road, with no ^{ing} at five left the place.
 I must not fill all my paper ^{it} managed to inquire so
 something more to-morrow. At Batabano I saw the
 Morrill, so for the time ^{from} I had been introduced.
^I, but took my check and
^{the} steamer. (The ^{steamer} 17

After dinner yesterday ^{the} Villa ^{will} took me to the
 house of a friend of his to call. There was a gentleman
 there who spoke English and talked with me while
 Mr. M. talked in Spanish. There were about a dozen
 ladies there who all sat in two rows in exact line. (I
 never *can* sit in a chair here without hitching out of
 line.) There was also a very pretty Señorita there who
 spoke a little English, so we managed to understand
 each other. I asked her to play the piano; she could
 not, but she called a negro woman in who brought a
 lot of boxes. Each box was full of little boards, with
 little pins stuck all over them. She put one of these on
 top of an upright piano, and then turned a handle like
 a hand-organ. It was a kind of music-box. She played
 a lively Creole dance. She would laugh and, looking
 round at me, would say: 'O you like *theis*?' 'Mucho,
 Señorita, muy bonito.' So we had a very pleasant call.
 I am tired of loafing about Havana and will be glad to
 get over to Cienfuegos and have something to do.
 Shall leave here on Sunday morning. Was introduced
 to the captain of the boat this morning. Let me know
 how Robin [my horse] is getting on, and send out a

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER: Captain Beal or Captain
hard Baldwins that will

... The voyage seemed
the steward was very attentive son
ing 'Martin Chuzzlewit' ; EDWIN F. ATKINS
with it. ... Late Tuesday
Morro and had to wait until
looks as quaint as ever, and *Father*
here before except that it is

December 15, 1869

As we entered the harbor
arrived from Spain, with the Havana since yesterday.
volunteers. The harbor is full of gunboats will please the
and has quite a formidable appearance. It must, I think, dis-
courage the rebels waiting for a sign to convince them that
they have nothing to expect from our Government,
although I think it cannot be denied that they have
much sympathy among the people. Now that Con-
gress has assembled, I presume we shall have the usual
amount of bluster and demonstration in favor of the
rebellion, but it will amount to nothing unless the
rebellion meets with some decided successes. The
P. M. Tinker has cleared for Cienfuegos. I intended
to have sent your clothes by her, but found this morn-
ing that she had towed into the roads waiting a wind.
Will send by next vessel. We shall probably load one
next week. There is no sale for sugars and probably
shall have dull times until after New Year and after
that, if gold should fall lower. It is 21¾ to-day. I
hope you will find the *Jacinta* loaded and away. I can-
not but feel very anxious until shipments begin again
so as to reduce our large balances in Cienfuegos. Keep
me well advised of what is going on. Sleighing is
splendid. I haven't found time to try it yet.

Your affectionate father

— E. ATKINS

CIENFUEGOS, *December 21, 1869*

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:

I have arrived safely at this city without being captured by any rebels. . . . I was fortunate in meeting Mr. Morrill and have seldom seen a pleasanter man to be with than he. We both left Havana at the same time, he going to Caibarien. The night before I left I took my trunk up to the depot to have it searched and checked, and the next morning at five left the place. I had to change cars once, but managed to inquire so that I got into the right train. At Batabano I saw the captain of the steamer to whom I had been introduced. He could not speak English, but took my check and put my trunk on board the steamer. (There's a flea hopping over my letter.) The *Villa Clara* was taken for troops, and I came down on the *Jagua* which did not get in until two o'clock. Stayed aboard until daylight and then went up to the hotel. When I had put on some clean clothes, I went to hunt up Mr. Torriente. That is the whole history of my journey. I am well settled now. I live at Mr. Torriente's; that is, I take my meals there and have my room at Abreu's where I am writing this. It is a very nice room, but no window in it, so when I shut the door it is quite dark. It has a marble floor, cot bed with no mattress, only a sheet. There are no persons in the house but Leopoldo and myself with two or three slaves, so I can make myself perfectly at home.¹ Don Ramon is exceedingly kind and shows me every attention possible, saying that I would learn to talk faster if I was at his house with the ladies.

I have been here only two days yet, but there is very little to do. I go to each of the vessels before

¹ My father had business dealings with the Abreus as with most of the Cienfuegos families. This house belonged to Señora Maria Pascual Abreu, but the family, with the exception of the son Leopoldo, were in Havana.

breakfast to see how they are getting on, and intend to give most of my time to learning the language, but at the same time visit the different wharves and get acquainted with the work here. Mr. Manuel Vives, bookkeeper at Torriente's, is very polite and offers to assist me in studying the language. Mr. Morris invited me to breakfast with him any morning, and says that if I show the least ceremony he would write to my governor about it. He certainly did not show much, as he had dogs and negro babies heaped up in beautiful confusion. He is a real 'old English gentleman.' He calls all the young men here *his* boys and treats them as such. If I get homesick I shall immediately go and take breakfast with him.

In the evenings it is quite pleasant here. All the doors and windows are thrown open and I can walk into any house without knocking. Mr. Fowler is next door to Don Ramon, Mr. Morris close by, and my own room not far off, so I can go from one house to another as I choose. It is very quiet here and hardly any signs of war, so do not feel in the least concerned about me. . . . Leopoldo has just come in and I have been playing to him on the piano which stands just outside my door, and finished up with 'Home, Sweet Home.'

Christmas is almost here. How I shall miss you all on that day! This is the first time I have passed the day away from home. I hope you will remember me when you are opening your stockings, and do not forget my turn, although the bag is empty. Tell Grace not to forget the Round Robin which all the girls were going to write. Remember me to Father Freeman and send him all my letters to read.

With a very merry Christmas to you all, and a happy New Year, I remain

Your affectionate son

EDWIN F. ATKINS

*From Mother**December 25, 1869*

MY DEAR SON:

The greetings of the season to you. We wish you were here to receive them in person. . . . This morning we made our Christmas circle in the corner of my chamber. A chair was set for you and we tried to imagine you present. I considered your letter, which arrived on the 24th, my best Christmas gift. Glad that you met Mr. Morrill. He looked like a lively, entertaining man. Did you take your pistol away with you? Father asked me and I supposed you had. If so, would the officers allow you to keep it?

I am looking forward to your next letter rather impatiently to know how you are situated. . . . I think Boston is very dull this winter. I have heard of no parties. . . . I hope the absence will be of much benefit to you in the way of studying Spanish and business experience, for Grace and I feel that we are giving up a good deal in having you away. This morning we packed a small box of apples for you, also sent your clothes and a book which I hope will amuse you.

It is now my bedtime, so I will bid you good-night.

MOTHER

CIENFUEGOS, December 28, 1869

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER AND SISTERS:

. . . I am quite at home here now. I take most of my meals at Mr. Torriente's and try to talk with his wife and daughter. I can understand a plain question now and am beginning to converse a little. We make strange work of it sometimes. I have just come from there. Clotilde and I have been talking for about an hour. She asked me 'Tiene V. spleen?' 'Spleen' being English, I could not think of any such word as 'spleen'

in our language. Finally I guessed it; she intended to say, 'Are you homesick?' but instead asked me if I was 'spleeny.'

Mr. Abreu's sister and younger brother have been spending a few days here, but I believe they returned to Havana last night. I do not see much of Leopoldo, although we are in the same house. I generally go to bed before he gets home and go out in the morning before he is up. I go down to one of the vessels first thing and take a cup of coffee, spend my time in looking around there until nine o'clock and then go to breakfast. Mr. Torriente keeps talking to me because I eat so little. He has everything very nice, but it is so different from anything in the States that I cannot eat a great deal. It is about eleven before we get back to the office, and then I spend two or three hours in studying. Mr. Torriente and Vives are my teachers. They give me a letter from Father and have me translate it into Spanish, and then one of them corrects it. We go home at three, but do not dine until four. I have the 'Pickwick Papers' at his house and read them before dinner. At five I go again to the vessels to see how they have been getting on through the day. Mr. Fowler takes tea at eight and I have been there several times to get some with him. I also dined with him on Sunday. It seems more like home there than at the other houses and I have a standing invitation there as well as at all the houses. All I have to do is to open the door of any one of them and take a seat at the table without any ceremony whatever. Mr. Morris in particular always has two or three extra plates for persons who drop in, and there is always somebody there.

Christmas morning I had quite a bad headache, so I had the steward of the *Stetson* make me a cup of tea and then lay down in the captain's berth and spent

most of the day there. I went to bed very early and wondered what you were all doing. The next morning I was all right again. Sunday evening I went to the Plaza to hear the music. There was quite a crowd of ladies and gentlemen there. I soon found Miss Torriente and she introduced me to a girl who could speak English. She said 'yes' and 'no' beautifully, but this was all she seemed to know.

I have sent into the country for one dozen boxes of guava and some oranges which I hope will keep until they get to Boston. I am going to ship them by the *Stetson* day after to-morrow. I received your letters on Christmas morning, a very good time to get them. I saw Mother's handkerchief waving on the wharf at New York as long as I could see the crowd there. Tell her that I can paddle my own canoe here and keep it afloat, too, even if the wind and tide are against me. . . . Mother says that she would like to hear some of my music. I give them a taste of it here sometimes, and really it compares very favorably with what other music I have heard. It may be owing in part to the piano's being so much out of tune that all tunes sound very much the same, or it may be owing to my superior talent in that line, it is not for me to say. I bought a panama hat for a Christmas present for myself and a sun umbrella, so I look quite tropical now. . . .

Your affectionate son and brother

NED

From Ramon de la Torriente to Father

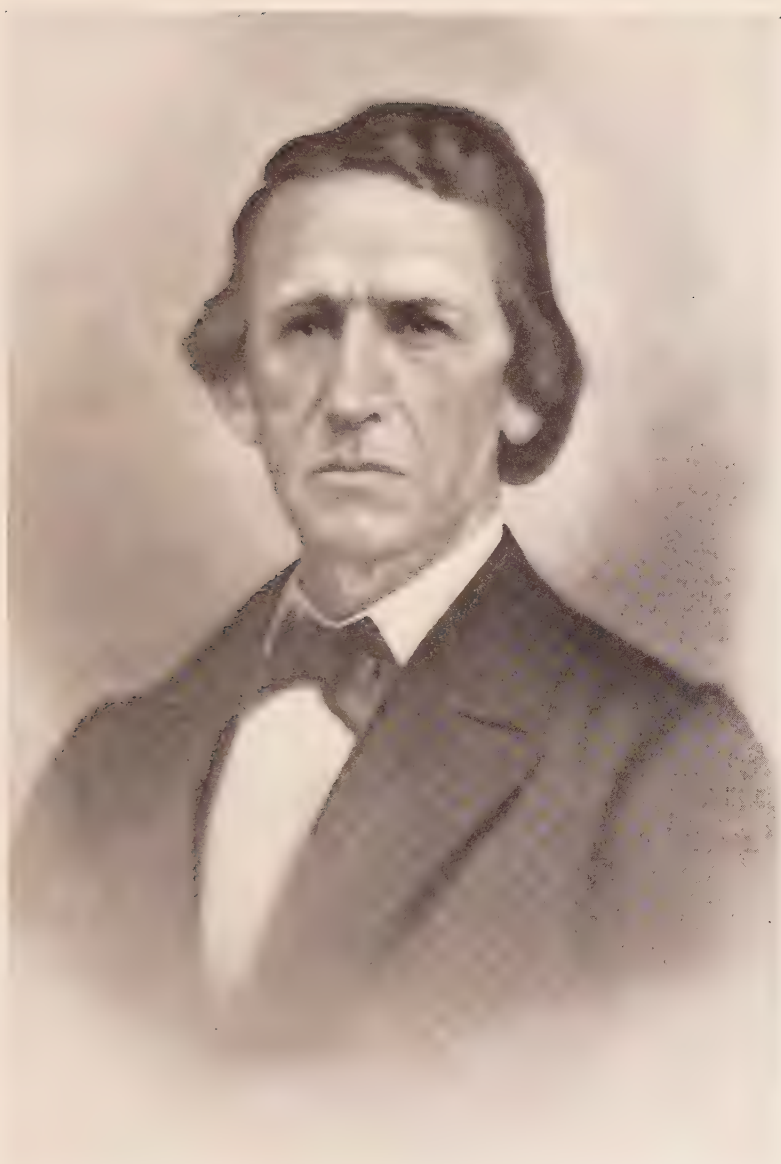
CIENFUEGOS, 30th December, 1869

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Your very much and always esteemed favor of 10th November and 15th inst. came duly to hand. Edwin is with us and I am trying to make his stay here so

much pleasant as can be. You know our town is little unpurpose for young men, as there is no amusement at all but the office, music every Sunday night at our Plaza de Armas and our Club where he goes part of the evenings. We see these people playing billiards and soon he retires to his room at Mrs. Abreu's. He comes with me every day to breakfast and dinner. I want to keep him so long as possible among the ladies, who are better to teach him our pronunciation and language, and I take note he is anxious to learn the Spanish, and as he is more like an old one than as a young of the day I hope he will improve quickly. I send him now and then to dine with old Mr. Morris, who is delighted when it happens so.

He ought to be here so long as there is good cool weather. I think by the middle of April or the end of the regular season to run away from our climate before it be hot in May. Then he will be sure of talking better Spanish. He does not like to be without doing something. He goes often to the *Stetson* and *Jacinta*; now they are gone he translates your letters to our language, makes Bills Lading and Invoices and some other things. I try to engage his time to avoid him getting tired of so poor a place as this. *Stetson* sails off this P.M. She carries forty Hogsheads of molasses, San José, in the poop. That is the only produce of the burned cane at San José. The captain carries three hundred cigars as those I use here — I hope you may like them. Please present one hundred of them to Mr. Freeman, as my answer to his toast of poetry on his birthday at which he was kind enough to remember me and mine. Is the old dear gentleman a poet? He is so good as any man may be even if he is somewhat of a poet. Please to make him and Mrs. Freeman my and my family's kind regards, and our wishes that he may be able to enjoy many coming birthdays yet. These rascals of incendi-



RAMON DE LA TORRIENTE



aries have half or nearly half of the cane of Cometa Estate. You know it belongs to one of Vives Brothers, to Pepe Vives and his sister's husband, that old-looking white and long beard you have seen here, Manuel de Gutierrez. I am as sensible to their loss as if they belonged to my family. That burned cane gives good sugar only during eight or ten days, afterwards it becomes dry and produces such sugar as those San José molasses mentioned above. Lately we are receiving plenty of troops from home; all of us expect for an early end of the robbers, who are all badly tiring us further than men's patience can endure. Even so our chiefs receive the forgiven, lots of them, when they get tired of such scandalous life in the mountains and come and ask for pardon, and even so they call the Spaniards as tyrants and sanguinary people.

The release of the gunboats at New York was a timely and hard blow your good President gave to these miserable fellows, who call them envoys of President Cespedes and members of the Cuban Government, so formally as if such a government could exist, and the way all of them are cheating people. And the best of it is that they cheat their own people, say their sympathizers, who pay them and send funds to them to buy guns, ammunition, etc., so innocently as if those of the Cuban Junta were persons of honor. Let them until they get tired. I think you will have this season some cargoes from a good planter here (Sarria). Produce is beginning coming more abundantly and I hope the *Clotilde* will not be detained here when she comes.

Present my best respects to Mrs. and Misses Atkins, Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, and wishing you and all yours a very happy New Year, I remain, my dear friend,

Very truly yours

RAMON DE LA TORRIENTE

From Mother

January 8, 1870

DEAR NED:

... How sorry Gracie and I were to know that you were ailing on Christmas Day. Your absence interfered materially with our pleasure on that occasion. If we had known that you had even a headache, our morning would not have passed as gaily as it did. Well, Ed, I do hope some benefit will accrue to you from this separation. You must study hard and learn to talk well. Constant occupation makes time pass swiftly. Like Mrs. Gummidge I think *I* feel more lonely than any one else. Father has so many troublesome things on his mind this season. Grace is studying hard. I feel very lonesome in the evenings.

You say you can paddle your own canoe now safely against adverse circumstances. I hope, my dear boy, that you *can* and *will*. Take the right course in all little things. Be such a man as your parents have fondly hoped your boyhood foreshadowed. Upright, with strict integrity of character, large-hearted, always ready to lend a helping hand to brother man, and you will be living to some purpose. A life like this will make your friends very happy, and your influence and example will be of benefit to your associates.

Last Wednesday I went to Belmont. As I stood on our upper front steps, the view seemed particularly pleasant. No snow to be seen, little patches of green grass shooting up in sheltered nooks, the hills looked purple through the hazy atmosphere, and the warm south wind brought such earthy smell, I really longed for spring to come again. I do not believe there is a lovelier spot in New England than that acre which holds our Belmont home. I hope you are still making progress in your Spanish.

Your affectionate

MOTHER

CIENFUEGOS, *January 9, 1870*

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER AND SISTERS:

. . . On Saturday I went to dine with Mr. Fowler. As it was a holiday we had a little extra dinner, and among other things peacock. It is a dish that I have often read about, and I believe the old Romans used to eat it (Grace will tell you if they did), but I never saw it before. If they had not told me what it was, should have called it turkey.

I go out to ride every few days in Mr. Torriente's chaise. He likes to have his horses exercised. But I have to keep inside the town and, as the streets are very bad, there is not much pleasure in riding.

I have appeared to-day in real Cuban dress. Mr. Torriente wanted me to get some linen clothes: he said four suits and a coat, but he finally came down to two vests and pants and a thin black silk coat. He almost insisted on my getting these, so I thought best to please him, and to-day I have put them on for the first time. The style would appear rather queer in Boston, but it is the fashion here. There are styles here that have passed out of fashion everywhere else; short walking dresses for the ladies have just arrived, but as they never walk they must use them for some other purpose. They are also learning a new dance, the Lancers, which they have just heard of. It is all the go now. . . . The weather has been very comfortable for the past week, and the wind north all the time. Sometimes at night it is so cool that I put my rubber blanket over the other one.

January 11

I received the mail Sunday eve bringing me five letters that I was glad enough to get, that from Mother dated 25th was as good as a Christmas present. . . . I have been reading Dickens's fine description of Christ-

mas, where the Pickwick Club spends the day in the country at Wardle's. It is an excellent book and I read it twice a day, before breakfast and an hour before dinner. I am quite curious to know what book you are sending me by the *Emery*. . . . I *did* have my pistol in my pocket when I landed at Havana, not thinking of being searched, but when I saw what was going on I thought best to surrender it of my own accord, so they said nothing, but kept the pistol. I was provoked to give it up, but thought best to say nothing. I left my name on it and when I return will get it if the rascals do not steal it, which is most probable.

I hope also that I shall derive some advantage from being away (which I am quite sure I am, not so much in the language as by talking with the people here and learning new things about business), for it is unpleasant enough being separated from all my friends and from all amusement also. I would *like* to leave to-morrow, but I am going to stay until the middle of next month. . . . I hope Grace may get through her hardest studying before I come back because if business is dull this year I will have a good deal of time at home. I hope the boys will write to me. I have written to almost all of them, and I am getting to be quite a letter writer. Good-bye until next mail.

Your affectionate son and brother

EDWIN F. ATKINS

January 12

I add a postscript to say that I received an addition yesterday of thirty-three flea bites.

NED

CIENFUEGOS, January 17, 1870

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER AND SISTERS:

. . . I have received your letters of the 5th and was glad to hear that you are all well, and also to get the

home news. I shall be glad to see Captain Beal out here with the new bark. I suppose he must have sailed before this. The *Clotilde* is here and I spend more or less time aboard every day.

Last Thursday I went with Mr. Fowler to Dos Hermanos. We had a couple of soldiers to go with us from the force of his estate. I spent the day at the mill studying the process of making sugar. At night we went to the farm at one end of the estate where he raises cattle and supplies for the hands. The house was small but very comfortable. Early the next morning we took a horseback ride over the estate. He has about two thousand acres. It was very pleasant riding through the cane fields, and seeing the hands at work cutting. As the sun got high I was obliged to put up my umbrella. It is quite common here to ride horseback with an umbrella. How would it look in our country on a hard-trotting horse? The garden was full of roses. Think of that for January, and the mango trees looked beautiful. We returned next day after a very pleasant and to me an instructive trip. That night I went with Mr. Torriente to the Juanita Estate which is only a mile from the town, and yesterday V. took me to their estate to breakfast where I also had a pleasant time, returning the same day. You see by this how quiet it is here now. There is very little to fear except on some estates at a distance from the settlements. The rebels seldom attempt to do more than crawl into the cane fields at night and set fire to them. You need not have the least anxiety about me while I am here or crossing the Island to return. . . . Should like to have been at home on Father and Mother Freeman's birthday and hope they had a more lively time than I had on mine the other day when I bade good-bye to my teens. The Government continues in its course of shooting prisoners. Of course it is well to be severe, but I do

not think they gain anything by such a course as that.

Your affectionate son and brother

EDWIN F. ATKINS

CIENFUEGOS, *February 6, 1870*

DEAR FATHER, MOTHER, AND SISTERS:

Yesterday I received mail bringing letters from you all. Mother gives me an account of her trip to Belmont. You must be having a very strange winter to be able to ride on wheels and play croquet in January. . . .

Mother wrote to tell my washerwoman (I call her Lucrezia Borgia for short) to put less starch in my handkerchiefs. Now you don't really think I use those handkerchiefs, do you? No, I can stand starched shirts very well, because I put them in the corner and crawl into them and afterwards, by plenty of pounding, can induce the tails to retire into my pants, but I can't wipe my nose on a shingle, so by a little domestic economy I have made those that I brought from home last till now. To-day I took the last. She also wants me to come home before the fleas eat me all up, and on the whole I think I will. My remains will leave here probably a week from to-morrow.

I was very glad to get Helen's letter. She told me what I wanted to know very much — all about the dogs. How I should like to see them and the dear old place at Belmont!

Yesterday I went to the funeral services of the man who was buried in Havana a few days ago, Don Gonzalo Castanon who was murdered at Key West. All the Volunteers here, under command of Don Ramon and Don Estéban Torriente, were there on both sides of the church, all standing, and all the ladies were in the centre lying around on the floor. They did a great many strange things and one was, when they rang a

bell, the trumpet sounded, and drums beat, and everybody went down on their knees leaving me in the position of being bolt upright in the midst of them. After service the band played a little and the troops all marched out. It was a very pretty and strange sight. . . . This is the last letter I shall write you from this place, but I will write again from Havana. Then home again, with a little more experience and perhaps a little more knowledge than when I left it: but more sure than ever that there is no other such place as Massachusetts, no other such city as Boston, and no other such home as *my* home. I remain

Your affectionate son and brother

EDWIN F. ATKINS

CHAPTER III

TEN YEARS' WAR

IN this chapter I am covering a period of twelve years, from 1870 to 1882. These years brought many changes in business and manufacturing methods. The devastation of war, extravagant management, and the loss of slave labor led to the impoverishment and transfer of ownership of many of the Cuban sugar estates.

During this period I became more and more absorbed in the Cuban end of the business of E. Atkins & Company, and in 1875 Father gave it entirely into my hands. I went to Cienfuegos for the crop seasons, and spent much time looking after the indebtedness to my firm, and securing shipments from the planters and business houses. I lived with the Torrientes in much the same manner that I described in the previous chapter. I attended to work at the office, studied Spanish, made many good friends and acquaintances, and in my spare time visited various sugar estates when conditions of the country would permit.

In 1876, I crossed the Island by way of Matanzas, and wrote Mother on my arrival at Cienfuegos:

I left Havana on Friday and went down to Matanzas where I spent the night at the Golden Lion. After dining at six, I strolled down to the Plaza and sat down by a fountain listening to the water and watching the

passers-by. A pleasant-looking man belonging to the class of trades people took a seat by me and we had some conversation. He told me that one of the best military bands was going to play there at eight, so I stayed to hear it. As the time came near, the crowd began to collect and many ladies drove up in their volantes. Volantes are something that you see at hardly any other place on the Island, but they still keep them in Matanzas, and very elegant ones, too, with two horses loaded down with silver harnesses and their tails tied up, and the negro rider in livery and jackboots. It is a very elegant turnout. The music was very good, and between pieces the volantes would drive round and round the Plaza to show off the ladies in them. After the concert a fire broke out in one of the large storehouses where there was a lot of rum stored, and it burned for an hour or two illuminating all the town, which is built on the side of a hill, and also the harbor and shipping. Next morning I breakfasted at eight and took the train at nine for Cienfuegos where I arrived about six o'clock. I found a great many troops through the Island. They were at all the different stations and many moving up and down the road.

Cienfuegos looks just the same as usual except that it seems very strange not to see Mr. Torriente at the office where he has always been so active. They have assigned his desk to me. He is very feeble and just able to walk from his bed to the table and back again, although his cough is somewhat better. He does not think or ask anything about his business and cannot talk a great deal. Mr. Morris has also been sick. He was very poorly for two months, but is much better now.

Tuesday

Yesterday passed very quietly. I go to the office about half-past seven and back to breakfast at ten,

stay at the office until four and go back again after dinner. A good deal of time is wasted in standing about and talking. They do not work as we do at home.

I have received a great deal of attention from everybody here and I have more invitations than I have time to accept.

The kind old negro cook, knowing by experience what dishes I like best, gives them to me twice a day with a regularity which is astonishing. For breakfast I have soup, rice and eggs, fried plantain, smoked pork, fried crabs, guava, cheese, and coffee; and for dinner soup, fried plantain, smoked pork, crab salad, guava, cheese, some kind of pudding, and coffee. As we dine at four and breakfast at ten, you may always know just what I am doing or eating, allowing thirty minutes for difference in time.

Father was not well in the winter of 1876, and I urged his coming to Cuba, ostensibly because I feared it would be the last chance for him to see Don Ramon. I went to Havana to meet him and after two very pleasant days there we came on to Cienfuegos. Before Father left for home on March 8th, we saw a grand celebration in honor of the 'Peace in Spain,' which marked the end of the Carlist troubles. Festivities began at seven in the morning with a military Mass upon the Plaza, attended by representatives from the different Provinces of Spain and Cuba, carrying their banners and dressed in their native holiday costumes. At four o'clock these delegates formed part of a great procession led by knights in armor, mounted on splendid horses, who impersonated the old con-



MR. AND MRS. ELISHA ATKINS IN VOLANTE



querors. In the evening there was a ball to which every one went. 'Cuba' waited to receive 'Spain' at the door; Cuban countrymen came to amuse the company with their songs and dances; and afterwards there were some dances by Valencian people. It was the Governor's purpose to encourage good feeling; and it is interesting to note that this friendly mingling of Cubans and Spaniards occurred two years before the end of the Ten Years' War.

Notwithstanding these demonstrations of peace, Cienfuegos was not without its insurgent alarms, and it had been hardly a month since the town was roused by an opera-bouffe performance which I greatly enjoyed. One evening Joaquin Torriente and I were sitting at the club looking over some papers when we heard shots — the preconcerted signal of insurgent attack to be given by the Volunteers stationed in the fort just outside the town. Instantly all was confusion — every one ran about like mad, ladies and children were hustled screaming into carriages and driven home with horses on the run, shops and houses were closed, and all lights were quickly extinguished. We walked up to the house and found it guarded by a negro with a big gun. Mrs. Escarza, who lived on the first floor, was crying for her husband, who was on guard at the fort, and all the little Escarzases were doing likewise. On the Plaza the troops were collecting and there was hardly a person to be seen in the street. Now and then a blind would open and some one would

peep out to see what was going on. Next morning it turned out that a small cannon had been fired upon a neighboring estate to call the hands to work, and the guard at the fort, thinking there was some fighting going on, had given the alarm, and that was the whole matter.

As a matter of fact, Cienfuegos was getting very little attention from the rebels, although I can remember one day seeing from the office five or six sugar estates burning at one time. Joaquin and I had one good ride across the country, but we could not venture out again, as there was too much risk of meeting a stray band of insurgents. In a general way, the insurgents were bent upon destroying property wherever they could find it, while the Spaniards, particularly the Volunteers, were equally bent on destroying the lives of the Cubans. These Volunteers were composed of Spanish business men, with their clerks and the like. They were drilled by turns every morning. The insurgents, who at first were composed of some of the wealthiest and best Cuban people of the Island, gradually degenerated into an irresponsible element largely represented by negroes. The Spaniards, who were the property-owners, naturally resented the destruction by the insurgents and retaliated by arresting and shooting Cubans indiscriminately. The shootings in Cienfuegos took place on the point across the bay in full sight of the town. I remember meeting a captain of Volunteers with his firing squad conducting two or three prisoners to be executed. Behind the pris-

oners was a box into which the bodies were thrown. The Volunteer officer stopped me and invited me to accompany him to the execution, which invitation I declined. Shortly afterwards I met the squad coming back, the band playing the royal march, the mules decorated with Spanish colors, and blood dripping from the wagon. It was a sickening sight.

Don Ramon, up to the time of his death, was a captain of Volunteers and a most humane and kind-hearted man. He could not countenance the blood-thirsty reprisals of the Spaniards. His strong character gave him great influence with the Spanish population, both military and civil. At a great sacrifice to himself and his business interests, he had spent much of his time at the Government House, interceding with the military authorities for the lives of many young Cuban boys of good family. But Don Ramon had no illusions as to the general character of the insurrection and was a stout loyalist. In one of his letters to Father he accurately presents the sentiments of the best class of Spanish residents:

Our Disgovernment at Spain needs so much of this Island that I do not think they can spoil it. They draw now and then for one million and it is their interest to sustain this Island long; moreover, the majority of us are conservative, and desire no reforms at all, and are satisfied with the existing law of 1870 about the emancipation [of slaves], say, all new-born from 1868 as well as those sixty years old are free. We see many who pay now \$650 to \$800 for good negroes for the estates. Other rich fellows are building new estates and many

building costly houses at cities, and it shows a full confidence in political matters.

Even so, if I can sell our estates, I will do it at once, as that would help us to balance your account one or two years sooner. I have suffered a good deal, yet, so far, if we escape with the loss of Ramona and L. O. [Estates] I will be satisfied. Two days ago rebels went to Sagua la Grande district and spoiled by fire thirteen estates and one of the railroad stations containing three hundred hogsheads of sugar. Yet I have confidence that the Island cannot be lost; our new Government at Spain is no Communist, as others we had not long ago, and our business may be more or less troublesome for you and me, both are getting old and tired of work, but necessity makes me work as a Young One, so far as I owe you a dollar, and our children will, at last, find the profit of a so troublesome life, as we have. I have it by the circumstances of this War, you have it by me, that this weighs pretty heavily on me; yet I have hopes of reaching a day when you and I can have some rest before our long voyage to another life, and I take pains, all I can, to see that day. Then let our boys work on.

Not many months later, good Don Ramon was stricken with his last illness, and died before my return to Cienfuegos the following year. E. Atkins & Company lost a faithful and upright associate and my Father and I, a very dear friend. Had he lived another year, he would have seen the end of the war which was terminated by the Treaty of Zanjón, February 10, 1878.

The Treaty of Peace fixed the year 1886 as the date for the final abolition of slavery in the Island, but negro insurgents under arms were given im-

mediate freedom and all slaves had the right to purchase their unexpired time at certain fixed values. The negroes, when freed, had to work for their former masters, receiving their food, clothing, medical attendance, and small monthly wages. Besides this, the estates were obliged to care for the old and young who could not work, for the law did not allow them to be sent away. On the whole, I considered this arrangement more expensive than free labor, as not over two thirds, and in many cases not over half, the negroes on an estate were working hands. But in spite of its shortcomings the Treaty of Zanjón allowed the country to turn its attention to the work of reconstruction, wherein nothing was more important than the building-up of the sugar industry. This was a difficult task.

All over the Island the sugar estates were in serious difficulties. Some were ruined and laid waste by the war and others were extravagantly and badly managed, making it almost impossible for the bankers to realize on their advances.

The transfer of the Carlotta Estate was typical of the difficulties encountered by Torriente Brothers and E. Atkins & Company in conducting their business with some of the sugar estates. In 1874 Don Ramon took measures to collect his debt from his extravagant kinsman, Juan Antonio, of the Carlotta Estate (now Jovellanos), near Cardenas. I wrote Father that Don Ramon would probably threaten foreclosure unless something were paid. In 1879, as the large debt on the estate was not paid,

Carlotta was transferred to Torriente Brothers, who pledged this estate to us as security for our account. Don Ramon was then dead and Don Estéban and Joaquin carried through the business. I wrote Father:

Don Estéban and I went to Cardenas to inspect the Carlotta Estate and while there I made arrangements about shipping the crop. We took a train for Bemba. There we found a volante from Carlotta and rode over to the estate, about one league. The estate was very beautiful; the batey occupies about thirty acres and is surrounded by a cement wall. The house and garden are simply princely. The house has twelve sleeping-rooms, a dining-room with marble floor, two long verandas with inlaid floors, set basins in some of the rooms and all kinds of fixings. The garden is large and beautiful with many foreign plants and trees, fountains, baths, grottoes, hothouse for ferns, etc. It is easy to see where the six hundred thousand dollars which Juan Antonio owes went to, as he always had his house filled with company.

The machinery and grinding house are in excellent condition: the rollers are six feet and engine strong; there are eight centrifugals, vacuum pan is good, though small, and can boil but seven hogsheads at a strike, and two strikes per day, say fifteen hogsheads. The whole crop with molasses ought to be worth say \$90,000; about one hundred sixty hogsheads are made, some forty-odd here in store, balance will be sent in at once; sugar looks well, perhaps a shade too good. There are some seventy slaves on the estate, mostly good hands; oxen were short and Torriente has bought some thirty yoke.

Thus many of the old estates passed into new

hands. The abolition of slavery, after the settlement of the insurrection, forced many changes in methods of business and manufacture. The old planters were slow to adapt themselves to changing economic conditions, but new blood and new capital were found; new processes and new machinery were introduced to offset the loss of slave labor; manufacturing and agricultural departments were gradually separated, and country people leased small pieces of land from the estates and delivered cane to the mills or centrals. Spanish immigration was encouraged, and constantly increasing numbers of native whites, following the example of these immigrants, worked with the negroes in the cane fields.

In spite of the troubles and anxieties that the early years of my business career brought me, I have many pleasant memories of good times with the resident families, which I have refreshed by re-reading some of my old letters.

Joaquin Torriente and I were much together out of business hours. We took regular Sunday afternoon walks, and once on a certain Saint's day, when of course no work was done, Joaquin and I took a stroll out of town and came across a small house where some African negroes were having a dance. Asking permission to enter, we passed through the house and into a small yard in the rear. The yard was about half as big as our yard at home and there, some twenty negroes, all women, were dancing the

snake dance, or charming the serpent. The orchestra, composed of three 'professors' from Guinea, sat on a fence and from three rawhide drums dispensed the music, which was supposed to charm all the performers as well as the serpent. The women moved round in a circle, swaying their bodies about and throwing their arms over their heads, growing more excited as the dance progressed, finally jumping and yelling like mad; one young lady, of two hundred pounds' weight or thereabouts, in a green print dress, started off in a regular breakdown, and finally had to be led off by a friend, not exactly faint, because she did not look at all pale, but puffing and blowing like a whale, and looking like a tierce of lard on the Fourth of July.

Leaving the dance, we soon came across another tribe who were having a musicale, the music being all from their native drums. Strolling on a little farther, we found a group of Cubans gathered about two other Cubans who were playing their guitars and composing songs as they went along; first, one would sing praises of his sweetheart, and then the other would sing of his. As we stopped to listen, with true hospitality they offered us a glass of the country beer. My hour's stroll gave me quite an insight into the customs of the country, in a way which I had not seen before.

One of my most vivid memories of this period was my arrival at the Torrientes' after Don Ramon's death in 1877. The ladies were all sitting in a room so dark that, when I first entered, I could see no-

thing. At once Mrs. Torriente and Clotilde burst out crying, and I had to leave the room while they recovered themselves. I found Mrs. Torriente's black hair turned quite white. The mirrors were covered with black cloth, and the whole room was as dismal as possible, very different from when Don Ramon was living.

Two years after Don Ramon's death, Clotilde married her cousin, Joaquin Cacicedo, and she and her husband lived with her mother. Some of us thought it was a marriage of convenience, as Cacicedo thereby succeeded to Don Ramon's business interests. Cacicedo introduced some improvements in the house, among them a Chinese cook. The table was excellent, and we no longer had jerked beef, which, after Don Ramon's death, was one of the staples. Clotilde continued to be as religious as ever, and had little shrines with candles burning before them all about the house. When in mourning, much to her husband's disgust, she went to the extreme length of putting on sackcloth and ashes.

One of my numerous trips with the Torrientes is described in the following letter:

SANTA MARIA, *February 2, 1879*

DEAR MOTHER:

I came here last night with Mr. Torriente to see this estate. It is a place I have never been on before, for during the insurrection the country about here was full of insurgents and it was a bad place to get at. This morning I was up and on horseback long before you were awake in Boston. We went all over the estate in

every direction. It is a beautiful country with rolling lands and slight hills. This estate is on high land and commands a beautiful view. We had a fine sunrise and a beautiful cool day to ride. I found my experience in horseback riding has been invaluable to me since I began to come to Cuba, as I can take any horse that comes along and ride as long as any of them. We got back to the house about half-past nine; I have had breakfast and now am writing my usual Sunday letter home.

I wonder how many of my Boston friends would recognize me to-day with my top boots and silver spurs, drill suit and panama hat. It is a beautiful day, and while you are no doubt at church listening to the wind and drifting snow howling around the steeple, I am sitting by the window where I can catch all the breeze and looking out now and then over the cane fields and at the palm trees and sky, clear and blue as with us on a June day. I am going to read a few chapters now in George McDonald's new book, 'Paul Faber,' and perhaps take a short nap before taking our afternoon ride.

Your affectionate son

EDWIN F. ATKINS

Joaquin Torriente was married in February, 1881. I was called up at two o'clock in the morning to go to the wedding. By some custom of the Church it was necessary at that time of year to marry early. The bride, however, was more than an hour late, and we were so cold and sleepy that I proposed going home and leaving it for another night. But just at four the bride arrived and the ceremony was performed. Joaquin Cacicedo and I

signed as witnesses and we all went to the new house, where we found a nice breakfast. After the breakfast we took the young ladies home and I went to bed. Joaquin was not romantic and half-past seven found him as usual at the office. It was lonely at the Torriente house without Joaquin, but, although Mr. Fowler asked me to come and stay with them, I would not leave Mrs. Torriente, as I felt she liked to have me there.

That same year I went to the Carlotta Estate with Joaquin. He proposed riding over to a neighboring estate to dine with a relation, and there I was introduced to Don Leandro Torriente, who, with his father Don Cosmé, had visited us at Belmont some sixteen years before. Don Cosmé was one of the first to make centrifugal sugars, and my father had introduced them in Boston.¹ Don Leandro spoke much of his visit to Belmont and of his father, who was now dead. He said Don Cosmé had the greatest regard for my father whose photograph he himself still had with his father's writing upon it, 'Kept as a reminder of my honor and regard for Mr. Atkins.' After learning who I was, he could not do enough for me, bringing out his best wines and cigars, and showing me about his place. It was a curious experience to meet him after so many years and under such circumstances. He was somewhat younger than I, but had a family of four sons, quite pretty children. His house and grounds were very

¹ Another son of my father's old friend Cosmé was President of the League of Nations and Cuban Minister at Washington.

fine. As we rode back by moonlight that night, I thought it was a real illustration of casting bread upon the water. I wrote home, 'Truly the name of Atkins has been the watchword to open many doors to my father's son in this far-off land.'

I saw a good deal of Don Ricardo Jova's family. There was Don Ricardo and Mrs. Jova, a son Lilo, and several pretty daughters. Three of the daughters were my especial friends. Rosa and Teresa both had beautiful voices. Josefa, or Chica, was the youngest of the three. Mrs. Jova herself was a fine handsome woman, and I was particularly fond of her. We had many good times together in those early years. I breakfasted with the Jovas several times a week — Mrs. Jova even made an attempt at New England fish balls to please me. In 1880 I dropped in at the Jovas every evening on my way to my room, to take coffee with them.

Then there was our old friend George Fowler and his family. He was English Consul and head of the firm of Fowler & Company. He was a dignified, pleasant man and had two sons and two daughters. One of these, Lola, was a handsome girl with much of her father's character, pleasant, but very quiet. She was much too dignified to joke with, as I could with Mr. Jova's daughters. Victoria, the younger, was less handsome, but more genial. I felt much at home at Mr. Fowler's, where there was almost always something going on, and I always enjoyed my visits at Parque Alto, the Fowlers' country place.

There were the Cabadas, who had a house about

two miles out of Cienfuegos — a beautiful little place with many trees and flowers. There were also the Philadelphia Cabadas with interests at Cienfuegos, who visited the Fowlers.

In the eighties I often speak in my letters of the Casanovas, who bought the Tanteo Estate of the Terry family, which comprised some six thousand acres, and which adjoined Mr. Fowler's Parque Alto. The Casanovas also had a town house where there were many dances, and I remember in particular a certain garden party where Chinese lanterns vied with a full moon to furnish light.

All the young people — Fowlers, Jovas, Cabadas, Casanovas, Montalvos, Torrientes — went to the balls, an occasional concert or season of opera, garden parties, sailing parties, or excursions to some country estates. Sometimes we went out to Mr. Jova's small place at the mouth of the bay called Pasa Caballo, a two-story house with broad verandas, looking in one direction to the open sea, in the other across the narrow entrance of the harbor to the Castle. And then there was the Josefa Estate, of which Mrs. Jova was joint heir with her brother Leopoldo Villegas. There was a beautiful large house built by her father, and when the family was in residence I often visited them. They kept open house, and often entertained as many as twenty at table.

Again and again I wrote home of the moonlight nights when evening excursions could be made; and once I remember walking on the Plaza and finding

it as bright as day, so bright that the people sat in the shade of a tree as if the sun were shining. Cubans were afraid of the moonlight and thought it caused all kinds of sickness.

In 1880 I wrote my sisters of going to a carnival fancy-dress ball with the Jova girls. They were all simply dressed in white with blue trimmings. Rosa and Teresa had powdered their heads, but Chica wore her hair in curls. She looked so simple and girlish that she was much more beautiful than the others who were considered belles. When the three were dressed, Mrs. Jova brought them together and asked me which was the prettiest. Of course, I would not venture an opinion, and really it was impossible to say, for all looked so well.

I wrote Mother about the opera:

Last night I was at the opera. Opera makes quite a sensation in Cienfuegos and the ladies dress up in their best to attend. Here the families occupy boxes and, as usual, I changed about from one box to another. Last night was with Cacicedo, the Jovas, and Mr. Marmal, one act each. You would laugh to see the amount of people I know at a public place. The hand-shaking I go through at the opera is like Mr. Winkley at church. At any rate, it is pleasant to be acquainted and respected, for I can say that our worst enemies here generally touch or raise hats to me.

There were also amateur entertainments. I can remember one in particular, in aid of the Catalan Charitable Society, when Mr. Jova was persuaded to allow Rosa to sing a serenade, accompanied by a piano and flute. She was a great favorite both on

account of her beauty and her charming disposition, and she received no end of applause and showers of bouquets with white doves tied to them by long ribbons. She had so many that she had quite a roost in the back yard the next day.

Increasingly in these years mention is made in my letters of the Montalvo brothers — Everisto, Lino, José (Pepe) — with whom I had many business dealings, too many Father sometimes thought, and whom I also saw much in a social way. I often visited their estates — Andrieta, San Lino, Concepción, Santa Rosa. Lino also had built a pretty little house on one of the islands in the harbor. In 1881 I frequently saw Pepe, who had recently come from Spain. Though he was nearly blind, he seemed to enjoy our parties as much as any one, and went to the first ball with me. As I led him about telling him who the different persons were, it seemed strange for me, an American, to be guiding one who was born in the place. He was a wonderful fellow, strong and handsome, and only about forty years old. I never heard him complain, and he never gave up anything on account of his blindness.

In February, 1882, I wrote home that never since my first year in Cienfuegos was I so tired of Cuba. The reason was plain, for the preceding September I had become engaged to Katharine Wrisley, and I was eager to get back to her and to make sure that all was going as it should with the house nearly opposite the old Belmont home, which my cousin, George Freeman, was renovating against the time of my marriage in the autumn.

CHAPTER IV

OLD SPANISH MERCHANTS

LONG before the founding of the city in 1819, the harbor of Cienfuegos, guarded by the Castillo de Jagua, which dates from the time of Philip V, was constantly used by the early Spanish navigators. Old Las Casas declared it to be the finest harbor in the world, and the opinion is not disputed by many modern naval experts. The port is now, in fact, one of the most important in Cuba, its development being the result of the opening of sugar lands in the district by members of old Trinidad families—Sanchez, Sarria, Montalvo, Yznaga, and others, who came with their slaves for that purpose. Hence Cienfuegos might be called the child of Trinidad. It was named for José Cienfuegos, Captain-General of Cuba at the time of its founding; but it is more poetically referred to as 'the city of a hundred fires,' recalling an alleged expression of Columbus when he first beheld the amazing brilliance of the Cuban fireflies: 'Mira los cien fuegos.'

Few people remember the old Cienfuegos merchants whose names are continually connected with the early history of their city. The foundation of the sugar industry, upon which these merchants thrived, dates back to the earliest days of Cuban history. By 1576 three sugar mills were in opera-

tion in the region between Havana and Matanzas. Crude wooden mills driven by oxen and open kettles for boiling the juice were the main equipment of these early factories; and the molasses was drained off through holes bored in the bottom of the hogsheads in which the sugars were stored. This was known as 'muscovado' or brown sugar. A better grade was the 'clayed sugar,' where the massecuite, or condensed juices, were run into conical molds, the ends of which were covered with clay. These sugars were shipped in boxes both to the United States and to Europe. Sugar, in these early years, was a great luxury, and it was not until late in the eighteenth century that it became an important article of commerce. One of the earliest prices quoted was the equivalent of forty-three cents a pound, when the purchasing power of money was at least twice as great as it is now.

By the middle of the nineteenth century steam mills for crushing cane were introduced. These were manufactured in Scotland, France, and the United States, and while perfect in their way were mere toys compared to the heavy mills now employed. These small mills extracted from sixty to sixty-five per cent of juice from a given weight of cane, while eighty per cent is now common; and where six per cent of yield in inferior sugar was obtained, twelve per cent or more of a much higher grade is now common. The bagasse, or ground pulp of the cane, which has always furnished the bulk of the fuel for sugar factories, was formerly spread out

to dry in the sun and fed to the furnaces by hand. It now goes, automatically, direct from the mill rolls to the furnaces; and as long as the mills are grinding, fuel is furnished to the boilers at little labor cost. The open kettles for boiling the juice were long ago abandoned, and boiling in vacuum substituted; and the molasses, which was formerly drained off from the sugar by gravity, requiring twenty days or more, is now thrown off by centrifugal machines in a few minutes. The cane was formerly hauled to the mills by ox carts, which were loaded and discharged by hand. It is now brought by train, much of it upon privately owned railroads, the cars being loaded and discharged by mechanical devices at a great saving of labor and time. Where formerly nearly thirty days were required from the time the cane was cut in the fields to the time when the sugar was ready, it now requires forty-eight hours upon well-regulated places where grinding continues day and night through the crop season.

In 1868 the sugar crop was produced by slave labor, and immense fortunes had been made both in the sugar and tobacco industries. The planters, in earlier times, spent their money most lavishly, not only in Havana, but in New York, Paris, and the cities of Spain, where they passed their time between crops. In the earlier days of sugar production the estates, then comparatively small, were individually owned. More attention was given to the production of cane than to the manufacturing of

sugar, and little was known of present methods of sugar factories.

At the beginning of my experience, the sugar crop was produced at a minimum cost to the planter of probably two and a half cents a pound placed in store at the shipping port. There the sugar was sold, weighed on Spanish scales with liberal allowances in favor of the buyer, as the loss in weight before delivery at a United States port averaged six per cent. The cost of weighing was shared by the buyer and seller, but the buyer bore all further expense — casks at six dollars and a quarter each, storage, labor, wharfage, and shipping charges. Transportation was by small sailing vessels of two to three hundred hogsheads capacity; and freights were high, twenty-five cents a hundred pounds, reckoned upon the weight at the port of entry. The United States Government weighers were also expected to be liberal, as it was known that hogshead sugars were always subject to drainage in storage; and this latitude opened the door to corruption. Honest merchants, who would not resort to bribery, frequently had just cause to complain of close weighing, and sometimes weighers were reprimanded and removed. But the New York Custom-House, especially, came to be filled with political appointees, and abuses, including both bribery and blackmail, were so flagrant that the Government went to the other extreme and passed the 'moiety rule' whereby it shared collections with the detectives whom it appointed to spy upon the importers.

These officials, often criminals themselves, proceeded on the assumption that all merchants were engaged in illicit trade, and under such circumstances it is no wonder that some of the older and more conscientious importers retired, while others, less scrupulous, found it as easy as before to beat the Government. It was a hard time for those who tried honestly to fulfil their obligations to the Government, and many were driven out of business.

There were no public banks in Cienfuegos in the early days, and the refactionist, or money-lender, was generally a Spanish shipping merchant or banker. Before the passing of the Mortgage Law in 1880, debts on sugar estates were secured by the Refaction Law which gave a lien on crops only, not on land, and, upon the ground of need to keep the estates operating, the latest advance took precedence of all earlier ones in point of security. The natural result was that a creditor, in order to hold his priority lien on a crop, often continued to furnish funds for operating from one season to another until a year of high prices gave him opportunity to collect, or the debt became so large as to force some settlement, generally effected by a compromise agreement or an extension. Twelve per cent interest was the usual rate; eighteen per cent, where an account was extended, was a common charge. Some of these private banking houses were very wealthy, and carried large sums of specie, perhaps a million or two dollars, in the flimsiest of safes. The only

guard was a night watchman, and as a rule some of the partners slept and ate in their stores and offices. Such was the common practice in Havana and Cienfuegos forty years ago, and such it is in the smaller places at the present time. I never heard of a safe being robbed; nor did I ever hear of any loss by fire in a mercantile house until it became the general custom to take out insurance policies.

The shipping merchants owned their wharves and warehouses where the planters who were indebted to them sent their produce. These warehouses were fitted with *tinglados*, or pans, to catch the molasses which drained from the hogsheads set on end above them, and molasses thus collected was a source of very considerable profit to the merchant. A planter, as long as he could get money to meet pressing needs, was generally willing to carry his sugars, hoping for higher prices, while the merchant was willing to advance against sugars in his stores, as in addition to his profit on the molasses in the *tinglados*, he collected liberal storage charges beyond his twelve or eighteen per cent interest on the money advanced to finance the crop. The merchants and bankers also had their own cooperage establishments, where hogsheads, which cost the planters six dollars and a quarter each, were made from stock sent out mostly by New England or New York or Philadelphia houses. The staves, made up into bundles called 'shooks,' were used again; the headings, also shipped in bundles for saving in space and handling, were always new. It

was stipulated in the contract for advances that cooperage was to be considered a part thereof. Cooperage created a large export business for the United States until hogsheads were supplanted by Calcutta bags and molasses was shipped in tank steamers. Where sugar was shipped for account of the planter, a liberal commission was charged upon the invoice, with a further charge for delivering out of store, for wharfage and cooperage; or a more common practice was for the merchant or banker to make his commission by buying the sugar at one sixteenth to one eighth cent a pound under market quotation. With all these charges he made a very handsome profit to set against any risk on his advances. Yet he sometimes lost; and he might have an immense amount of money out, as accounts were often kept open for years before final settlement could be made.

Planters bought their supplies on credit from importing houses, settlement to be made after marketing their crop; no interest was charged on these accounts, but a price was set high enough to equal a very high rate of interest. By such a system there could be no competition in business, as a planter, who seldom had any ready cash, was tied up to one dealer, for no others dared to trust him, as they could not be sure of the extent of his credit. The whole method was slipshod, and led to careless buying and slow and inaccurate accounting.

When I first went to Cienfuegos, practically all the business was in the hands of Spanish merchants.

Chief among them were Torriente Brothers, who acted as agents for E. Atkins & Company in the purchase and shipping of sugars, and also, when necessary, in advancing money to planters to finance their crop. The elder members of the firm were Don Ramon, our dear old friend, and Don Estéban; and of the younger generation, my companion Joaquin Torriente and his brother-in-law Joaquin Cacicedo, who succeeded to Don Ramon's interest in the firm. Don Estéban had many children. His son Baltasar, a good fellow, was brought up as a clerk with Torriente Brothers, and was with us for a time in the Boston office. He inherited some property, established an importing business of his own, and he is now the only Torriente at Cienfuegos. Estéban Cacicedo, brother of Joaquin and nephew of Ramon and Estéban Torriente, came from Spain as a boy and entered the firm of García & Company, where he finally became a partner and accumulated quite a fortune. We have been intimately associated and have always been firm friends.

García, a Spaniard from Venezuela, came to Cienfuegos as a cook. He had straight bristling hair which he always wore close-cropped, and from his swarthy skin was nicknamed 'El Moro.' In time he came to have considerable influence among the Government employees and the military, and was, indeed, a leader among the Spaniards. His breakfasts and dinners were famous. He paid his cook a higher salary than his bookkeeper. The table, a

cedar board on wood trestles, was set up for each meal in the store in the midst of bags of rice, boxes of herring and soap, with hams hanging from the ceiling overhead. The table was covered with the finest linen and set out with the finest of wines and cigars. García held the head of the table, with the formal guests at his right and left; then came the clerks, with due regard to precedence; and below them were the Spanish porters in undershirt and trousers. The dishes, but not the wines, were common to all. García, served first, merely tasted a dish, helped the immediate guests, and then it was pushed zigzag back and forth across the table until it reached the foot. The company was assembled promptly at ten by a servant's striking on a tumbler with a knife. The ringing of these tumblers, at the hour of ten, could be heard all over town; for every merchant breakfasted, patriarchally, after the same fashion, although his chef might not measure up to the standard of García's. Rough as the surroundings were, I have never tasted better meals than at the breakfasts of these Spanish merchants. Nor was the custom confined to Cienfuegos; for at Havana, also, until very recent times, the ringing of tumblers summoning staff and guests to breakfast might be heard at ten o'clock in many of the old importing houses.

The junior partners of García & Company were Antonio Yntreargo and Nicolas Castaño, who afterwards left García to found the firm of Castaño, Yntreargo & Company. Yntreargo, who died a

number of years ago, left quite a fortune; and Castaño, who continued the business alone, is now one of the richest men in Cuba. No detail is too small for his personal attention; and he has never trusted to an attorney, although previous to the Spanish-American War he did a large exchange business. Other houses were Grau, Lopez & Company, Abreu & Jova, Aviles & Le Blanc, and Tomas Terry. Aviles and Le Blanc were French, the latter a baker in his early days who had been set up as a merchant by Hood of Baltimore, owner of the Carolina Estate. Old Mr. Hernandez, father of the Hernandez brothers who were brought up in our Boston office, was a member of this firm.

Tomas Terry landed, a poor man, from Venezuela; he married a thrifty wife, and the two, living frugally, bent their efforts to saving money as well as making it. The slave trade was then flourishing, and Terry used to pick up sick negroes for a song, nurse them back to health, and sell them at prices ranging from eight hundred to a thousand dollars a head. Then he bought a sugar estate that he might have a market for his negroes, and started a house at Cienfuegos which later included a cooperage. He made one or two voyages a year to Boston with cargoes of molasses which he sold through our house. The proceeds he invested in drugs, medicines, and all kinds of small articles, which he could sell at a good price in Cienfuegos. During the great railway development of the 'seventies, he made large investments in Union Pacific bonds through

my father and in Lackawanna & Western Railroad stock through Moses Taylor of New York — all handsome investments which he held to the time of his death. He also owned many other good securities including Government bonds of the United States, England, and France. Incredible as it may seem, Terry's estate was appraised at upwards of thirty millions.

Fowler & Company and Aviles & Le Blanc were the only houses in Cienfuegos that were not Spanish. Our old friend, George Fowler, was head of Fowler & Company, and seems to have possessed all its energy and most of its dignity.

He had several brothers. Charles was a mild-spoken man, moved very slowly, and always carried a green silk umbrella. James and Fred were noted for being 'the laziest men in New York,' where they had a branch house. Fred was as slow as Charles, and, like him, carried an umbrella. Once, when visiting one of their Cuban estates, a large ram disputed the right of way with Fred, who rather than hurry tried to make friends by patting the ram's head. He was butted over, his glasses and umbrella lost, and when I saw him shortly after he was in a very battered condition. George told me the story with much amusement and said that nothing, not even a ram, could force Fred to quicken his pace. Jim Fowler, who spent his summers at their old home in St. John, New Brunswick, had a sail-boat on the river there and once invited me to go on a little yachting trip. When I arrived at St. John,

there was no Jim, but his agent told me that if I'd take the steamer up-river I'd be likely to find him somewhere. I travelled all day, and late in the afternoon the steamer was hailed from a small boat by a man who proved to be a messenger from Jim. We rowed some distance up a branch of the river where I found Jim's sail-boat tied up to a tree and Jim himself established in a big rocker on deck. He was glad to see me, and considering the surroundings entertained me well. The mother of these Fowlers spent the winters with her sons at Cienfuegos for many years. George Fowler's widow is still living in Havana.

Felipe Quesada and Manuel Blanco were most intimately connected with E. Atkins & Company. Quesada was an Isleño whom Don Ramon de la Torriente had befriended by loaning him a few dollars to purchase some oxen and a cart. He was a hard-working, honest man, but uneducated, and in due course of time accumulated enough money to buy a small place, Santa Rosalia, with some negroes to work it. The sugar from this estate was shipped to my father and Quesada credited with the proceeds; but he drew very little on the account and at the time of his death it had reached a considerable sum, which Quesada willed to his major-domo, one Manuel Blanco, a cooper by trade, who had become his confidential man of business. But shortly before his death Quesada married a young country girl, and immediately there began a long contest over the will which turned out in favor

of Blanco, who, however, compromised with the widow.

Quesada, evidently, had not spent even the money which he had drawn from us, for after his death various sums were found secreted in his dwelling-house and buried about the estate. His balance with E. Atkins & Company was transferred to Blanco's name and went on accumulating for many years until it became so large as to constitute a menace, subject as it was to sight draft. Blanco would not reduce it nor would he allow us to invest it for him. He said he did not want any interest, but wished to leave the sum with us for safe keeping. Finally I persuaded him to take half the amount and we allowed him four per cent on the balance up to the time of his death many years later. He never made a will, though I urged him to do so. He had a sister, Candida, a nephew and several nieces, and said he would let them fight it out when he was gone. Candida is still living. Her brother before his death told her never to sign her name to any document — an unnecessary charge since she cannot read or write; but the result has been to prevent any settlement of the estate, much of which is in lands. Several of the other Blanco heirs also left their property in our hands. Some of it is invested, but a great deal of it is an open account. They cannot be persuaded to withdraw it for more remunerative investment; and these accounts, running through a period of fifty years, have now been with us for three generations.

A similar case was that of José N. Hidalgo, an old Spaniard who was said to have been a slaver and pirate in his early days when such occupations were both profitable and popular. His mind weakened with age, and his neighbors said that, much to the embarrassment of his family, he would go to the housetop and there, as from a quarter-deck, issue orders to his pirate crew. His property was in our hands, and on his death went to his widow and from her to a nephew, Juan Ferrera, who was then an old man. Years later, when the United States income tax and excess profit laws were passed and it became desirable to reduce our open accounts, we had the greatest difficulty in inducing Ferrera to take his funds.

There was but one ship broker at Cienfuegos, my old and much-valued friend, Federico de Mazarredo, and through him I used to charter many small vessels at freights varying from fifteen to twenty-five cents per hundred pounds. Sometimes I chartered them by cable, but as frequently the boats came into Cienfuegos to seek business. In connection with his business as broker, Mazarredo ran a ship chandler's shop, which the captains used as a club. There captains were always to be found and there I, also, spent many an evening. I remember once, when merchants were waiting for lower freight rates, stealing a march on them by chartering five or six vessels at Mazarredo's in one evening.

It was not uncommon for many vessels to be in

port, for twenty days were allowed for loading, and the crews often made things lively in the town. There were many fights among them which the police were powerless to control, nor did the police dare interfere with their pranks. I remember well their burlesque, on an off night, of the military concerts given Sunday and Thursday evenings, when the band surrounded by a squad of soldiers would play in the centre of the Plaza and all the townspeople come out to hear the music and promenade. That night the sailors, solemnly escorted by some of their companions armed with broomsticks, marched up the Plaza, playing jews'-harp and accordions.

In the early days when customs duties were heavy upon all articles, smuggling by the importing houses was general. Spanish officials, from the lowest up to the highest, encouraged this illegitimate trade and shared in its profit; for salaries were small, terms were short, and they were expected to live off the collections during their terms of office. Many honorable Spanish merchants, exact in all other dealings, considered it quite legitimate to evade payment of duties wherever possible; in fact, otherwise they could not compete with others in selling, and moreover would have been persecuted by the officials who would have felt themselves defrauded of their share of the profit. It was always claimed by these officials that they had to share the spoils with those higher up, back to their patrons in Spain who had secured them their berths. These

appointees seldom had any interest in Cuba, but were eager to return to Spain with their savings; and this system, which held in all Spain's possessions, I believe to have been a prime reason for their loss. Now and then a wave of reform set in, short in duration, when heavy fines were assessed upon the wrongdoer, unless he was fortunate enough to escape by paying a fat bribe. Needless to say, in any case no payment reached the Spanish treasury.

The old ship captains who made regular trips to Cuba, often popular men well known to the minor customs officers, not infrequently did a little smuggling on their own account, or on joint account with the local dealers. They were seldom caught, and some of their adventures are worth relating. There were two vessels of different ownership running into Cienfuegos whose captains were warm friends and both very popular. They made the quickest voyages in the trade, and were known to be smuggling, but were not to be caught. The collector of customs at Cienfuegos determined to get one of these captains who then happened to be in port, and charged both his officer on the ship and a second on the wharf not to leave their posts for a moment. The officer on board reported the danger to his friend, the captain, who immediately saw a way out. There were some cases of cholera in port at the time, and, just as the discharge of cargo was ending and the time for official search approached, the customs officer was to throw himself on the deck, roll about in agony and yell for all he was

worth. The man carried out his part to perfection, the captain sent the wharf officer on the run to the collector with a message that the inspector was seized with cholera and likely to die if not immediately removed to the hospital. In the resulting confusion the contraband was landed, and the delayed search proved the captain innocent.

Such were the conditions that surrounded the lives of the old merchants of Cienfuegos.

CHAPTER V

CHANGING CONDITIONS

THE Reverend Abiel Abbot, travelling in Cuba in 1828, said of the Spanish immigrants: 'There is a considerable number of Catalans and Biscayans in the Island; and they have little of the character we have generally ascribed without distinction to the Spaniards. They arrive in poverty, begin with a shop six or eight feet square, live on a biscuit, and rise by patience, industry, and economy to wealth, and, unlike the Yankees, never fail.'

In my day all this was equally true; and in the Cienfuegos business houses most of the clerks were Spaniards, hard-working and frugal, who despised the luxurious, indolent Cubans. I remember once, when walking with one of these clerks, he said, pointing to a Cuban grandee who passed us in a volante: 'Why don't you ride like that instead of walking and carrying your bag?' 'I could,' I replied, 'if he would pay what he owes me.' This man, who had married a wealthy woman and cut quite a swath with his fine volante and fine clothes in the streets of Cienfuegos, exemplified the old Spanish proverb: 'Padre bodeguero, hijo cabelero, nieto pordiosero' (Father a shopkeeper, son a gentleman, grandson a beggar). Ponce was one of the victims of the new economic order. He and other sons of the old Cuban planters were not

brought up to industrious habits or the care of property; and they had inherited little but the memory of past glories. It was hard for them and hard for the women of their families who, educated as they had been in Paris, or Madrid, or the States, and accustomed to do nothing for themselves, were quite helpless without their slaves.

Another factor which added to the impoverishment of the Cuban sugar industry was that during the early years of the nineteenth century European countries realized the value of establishing national sugar industries. France and Germany were especially eager in its promotion, and subsidized the industries from their national treasuries. By 1870 the European production of beet sugar became an important factor in competition with the Cuban crop. This was a period of great change in the sugar-cane industry; the method of manufacture changed from muscovados to centrifugals; the great American refining industry began, and sales direct from commission merchant to grower declined and ended. The refiners had their own agents who bought direct of the planters, and when the cable came into use the agents were done away with, and refiners dealt direct with the shippers. Our commission business, which had run as high as a hundred thousand dollars in a season for commission and guaranty, was destroyed: for commissions had fallen from five per cent, duty-paid price, to one per cent on cost and freight, then to a fraction of one per cent.

My letters of the period are full of the difficulties

of the planters and especially of our difficulties in realizing on our accounts. My father was continually cautioning me about limiting our outlay; and by 1882, with the landslide well on, he was especially anxious about our advances to the Cienfuegos planters. He thought the bare commission and seven per cent interest was not sufficient compensation for risking such large investments of capital that might be used to better advantage at home. The year 1882 also marked the beginning of our use of steamers instead of the old sailing vessels; and Father agreed with me that 'steam was revolutionizing the Cuban trade, as everything else.' We made, I believe, the first Cuban time charter of a British steamer.

In contrast with the past, 1882 might be said to mark the beginning of our sugar-producing business in Cuba. Two years earlier foreclosure proceedings had been begun against the Sarria Estates. Soledad, the most important of these estates, was developed by old Juan Sarria before 1850. Some years later he built up Rosario, an adjacent estate, from the resources of Soledad. On his death Soledad was left to his widow, Doña Mariquita, and Rosario became the property of his son, Domingo. Domingo built up another estate, Cantabria, from the resources of Rosario. In later years he went to live in Spain and his properties, together with Soledad and other Sarria estates, were managed by José Manuel, a younger half-brother. Domingo soon became dissatisfied with the management of José

Manuel and transferred his power of attorney to his son, Domingo, who had been brought up in luxury in Madrid. The story goes that the young Domingo shod his horses with silver, and so great was his magnificence that the people often took him for a member of the royal family. Old Domingo managed to keep his hold upon his Cuban estates, but after his death it did not take the son long to dissipate the property. Although José Manuel had an unmerited reputation as a good planter, there is no doubt about his inability as a business manager. He certainly did not have the capacity to handle affairs in the conditions induced by the Ten Years' War, and the Sarrias were involved in serious difficulties. There were many creditors, chief among them Torriente Brothers, who during the war carried a number of plantations largely with money furnished by E. Atkins & Company. It was necessary to do something to secure this heavy indebtedness of the Sarrias; and Don Domingo having settled his affairs separately, E. Atkins & Company and Torriente Brothers took a joint mortgage on four estates — Soledad, Doña Mariquita's estate; the San José de Jibacoa of José Manuel, situated at Rodas, then called Lachuzo, at the head of the Damuji River; the San Ygnacio property of Joaquín Sarria; and Vueltas.

In 1880 matters came to a crisis. It became necessary for Torriente Brothers and ourselves to foreclose on our joint mortgage and force the estates into the hands of a receiver; and foreclosure pro-

ceedings, which took some years to complete, were begun against the other Sarria estates. The whole procedure was a shining example of the intricate course of Cuban law.

The courts at that time were hardly worthy of the name, the judges being political appointments from Spain who turned in part of their moderate salaries to their patrons. This system was in vogue for many years and no one expected an honest decision. Moreover, the judges, being in many cases no more than clerks or notaries, had little knowledge of the law. Once, at Cienfuegos the merchants subscribed to pay a judge's salary in order that he might live; when two of these merchants as litigants had conflicting interests the judge was placed in an embarrassing position. It was common to seek an opinion from the judge in advance of his decision, as happened in a number of cases I knew of. In the early days, forty or more years ago, lawyers were hired not so much for their legal ability as for their political or personal influence with the courts.

Joaquin Torriente, who had been trained as a lawyer, and I were in charge of our joint case against the Sarrias. The first step was the appointment of a receiver for the administration of the estates, which required, if I remember correctly, a vote of creditors representing two thirds of the liabilities and three quarters in numbers. We easily controlled the required amount; but as the estates owed nearly everybody in Cienfuegos, we were very uncertain in regard to numbers; and it was im-

portant that we nominate our man, Sotero Escarza, while the Sarrias wished to continue in control of the properties through their nominee.

The day before the creditors' meeting we were told that a large number of false credits had been issued. A bodeguero, who had a store in front of the house where I lived, had tried to induce me to buy his claim of a few thousand dollars, but I had refused, not wishing to increase our claim. As I went home to breakfast that morning, I found a crowd of workmen, mostly Spaniards, around this store, and upon inquiring from the proprietor who they were, I was told that they were Soledad workmen who had come to attend the meeting, and that as they were countrymen of his (Viscainos) he thought he could control them. The result was that with the help of Joaquin Torriente I bought the claim of the storekeeper at twenty-five per cent and told the others I would give the same for their claims, if they would vote as I directed. All promised to do this. I sent for some gold and they signed the claims on the top of a fish keg. I then led the procession to the court, where I gave the sheriff a doubloon to guard them in a room until needed. The men acknowledged, before they took the money, that their claims were fictitious and had been given them by the Sarrias for voting purposes.

Our lawyer, Porrua, a highly respected Gallego, a dignified man, who had been judge in Santo Domingo, had not been taken into the secret; and when I reached the court he told me that our case

was lost owing to the number of fictitious claims which had been issued by the Sarrias. But as the creditors were called to present their claims, I furnished each with a ballot inscribed with the name of Escarza; all being in order the claims were approved by the court and turned in at face value, and our man was elected receiver. Nearly all the Cienfuegos lawyers were present, but none were more surprised than José Porrua. It was the custom in such cases where the owner was a widow for her lawyer to request an allowance of the court during the receivership. But the Sarria lawyer was so taken by surprise at the turn of events, that he forgot to ask for Doña Mariquita's allowance and I myself made the request, which was granted after he had left the court.

Escarza administered the estate to the satisfaction of the creditors to the end of the receivership, during which many amusing incidents took place. It had been a long established custom to allow the house that had advanced the money with which to operate an estate to buy the sugars, which were put up at auction by the receiver; the other houses would bid at prices a little below the market. But once this honored custom slipped up when we had a judge recently arrived from Spain, a mere notary's clerk who got his appointment as a deserving member of the political party then in power. He knew little or nothing of law procedure, particularly in Cuba. In this case the sugars, after due advertisement, were put up at auction; but a merchant, so-

called, whose father-in-law had just set him up in business, took advantage of the new judge to disregard the established custom by outbidding us in the sale, and the sugars were knocked down to him. Escarza afterwards protested to the judge, who proved amenable to suggestion. 'You must annul the sale and put the sugars up at auction again,' Escarza told him. This the judge promised to do.

When the hour for the substitute auction approached, I started up to the court, but was stopped by a notary who told me that the sale was over. I, naturally, was indignant; but the notary said if I would return to my office, he would come down and explain. It seems that the judge, although ready to oblige Escarza, had no idea how to carry out his promise to secure the sale to us until, half an hour before the time set for the auction, he hit upon a happy expedient. He told the clerk to climb up on a bench and set the clock half an hour ahead, and then entered my bid as accepted. Just then the former purchaser appeared, and the judge asked what he could do for him. 'I have come to attend the auction.' 'You are too late,' replied the judge, 'the sale has taken place.' The would-be purchaser referred to his watch, and claimed to have twenty or thirty minutes leeway. The judge indignantly pointed to the clock, said the court was guided by official time, and that he could not undertake to regulate all the watches in Cienfuegos. This was the way my bid happened to be accepted by the

court, although I was not present and knew nothing of the arrangement.

Another time there was a suit pending in the case of the San José Estate. The case was a perfectly clear one, and decision had been given in our favor; but the plaintiff, within a given time, had a number of ways in which to appeal. Two or three days had elapsed, and the time was getting short. After dinner I went down to the public wharf, which was in the shape of a half moon, where many people were accustomed to take their evening stroll; and among them, this evening, I was glad to see the Spanish lawyer who was in charge of the Sarria interests.

I passed him a couple of times; the third I bowed to him and walked on; the next I stopped, shook hands, and asked him how he was getting on with his clients. He said very badly indeed, that he had been unable to collect any fees from them and was hard up for money; that he was called to Santiago by a case, but did not have even the money to pay his fare. I sympathized with him deeply, and told him that I should consider it a favor if he would allow me to pay his fare; that the coast steamer was at that moment lying at the wharf ready to sail; that I would buy his ticket if he could start at once. I knew that he could not get back under ten days, when the time for appeal would have expired. He was profuse in his thanks, and I saw him safely aboard the steamer. The next day there was a general hunt for the Sarria counsel, but

no one except myself knew where he was. This was the last of my many suits with the Sarrias, and left us in shape to clear up our titles, which was done shortly after.

Although under the foreclosure proceedings Torriente Brothers were joint tenants with E. Atkins & Company, I assumed active supervision of the estates: for I appreciated that owing to the precarious financial position of the Torrientes, our firm, individually, might have to take over some of the estates; and of the four estates in the receivership I had always taken an especial interest in Soledad.

My early impressions of Soledad are given in letters to Mother:

CIENFUEGOS, *February 23, 1881*

DEAR MOTHER:

Last Friday and Saturday I spent on Soledad. Captain Beal went with me and when he returns to Boston he can tell you all about the place. I am to have the general direction of the estate at present with Cacicedo and so we went to put things in working order. It is a beautiful spot. You will have an idea of its size if I can describe a trip up a little hill which we took in order to see the lay of the land. The hill is about the middle of the estate and very near the building. It is very steep and about as high as our hill in Belmont. You can imagine about the same country as Belmont with sugar cane planted all over the valley as far as Arlington and Cambridge, and nearly up to Waverley. Then a thousand acres of woods extending up to the Lexington line beyond the willows, and all the rest of the town of Belmont to the northwest in

pasture land extending over hills and valleys. Some twenty miles away on one side are the Trinidad Mountains, their shape much like the Rocky Mountains, and on the other side a dozen miles away is the Bay of Cienfuegos. It is a beautiful scene and well deserves its name 'Solitude.' The place has four thousand and five hundred acres — I should think about the size of Belmont. It is full of streams with fish, and game of all kinds, and has quite a large river on one side where the sugars are shipped to town. There is a nice house on the place which we can fix up at very small expense and where I hope some of you will some time go to pass a few days. . . .

Your affectionate son

EDWIN F. ATKINS

SOLEDAD, *January 8, 1882*

DEAR MOTHER:

We came here last night and have been riding about the estate to-day inspecting everything. The weather is beautiful, not over-hot, but like our summer, only with more air. This morning after breakfast all the negroes of the estate came to welcome me with presents of chickens, eggs, etc. I had to bless them all in turn and give them a small present. It was a funny sight for Stillman, and he said he wished Kate could see me, in my linen suit, top boots, silver spurs, sombrero, and pistol belt. Imagine me the centre of a crowd of over two hundred negroes, each one of whom kneeled down on passing me, saying, 'Your blessing, Master,' and then formed into line. They were all the way from two years old to one hundred. I was very glad to see how contented they all were, as it was quite the contrary last year, when Torriente and I first came to the estate.

Monday

... This morning Stillman and I were up early and took a long ride of three hours or more through the woods of the estate. It was a beautiful day and the woods and fields were filled with flowers. Certainly the months of January and December here are the most delightful climate of the world. We are just about going over to Josefa where Mr. Jova's family are staying and then will return to Cienfuegos for the night. . . .

Your affectionate son

EDWIN F. ATKINS

I can remember, when I first visited Soledad with José Manuel Sarria, I reined up my horse as we reached the top of the ridge that overlooks the batey and expressed admiration at the beautiful view of valley and mountain. 'It is yours,' said José Manuel, in the usual Spanish formula. And I felt pretty sure it was, for I believed then that we should have to take possession to protect ourselves. When the settlement came with the Torrientes and we divided the Sarria interests, no one could understand why I preferred this property; but aside from its beauty which had always charmed me, there were the solid considerations that it contained some very good lands which were so isolated by hills and mountains that we were assured of protection from future competition; and the Arimao River, which ran through the property, offered facilities for cheap transportation. The plan laid out in my mind then was gradually developed during succeeding years, and I have never had occasion to regret my choice of locality.

CHAPTER VI

A DIFFICULT YEAR

ON October 12, 1882, Katharine Wrisley and I were married, and in the winters of 1883 and 1884 Mrs. Atkins was with me in my old quarters at the *Torrientes*. Of that first winter I have no record, but 1884 was, in many ways, the most crowded and anxious and dramatic of all my winters in Cuba. I thought a few such months would make an old man of me. Everything seemed to go wrong from the moment we left home. Mrs. Atkins was very ill on the steamer going down from New York, and had to spend the greater part of the winter in bed. Soon after our arrival we received the news of the death of her father. In this year all Cuba's long-drawn-out economic troubles seemed to come to a head. Late in February I wrote home: 'We must prepare for a storm here before clearing weather can come, but when it is over the Island cannot fail to be better off.'

There had been much discussion as to the possibility of a reciprocity treaty between Spain and the United States, for trade between Cuba and the United States had always been greatly hampered by the high tariff policy of both countries, and, reciprocity or no, business men in Cuba felt that Spain should at least remit some of the heavy ex-

port taxes if the sugar industry was to be continued in the Island. Spanish commerce was guarded by the strictest tariff. That in force up to the time of the Spanish-American War was arranged under four heads, namely:

1. Spanish goods in Spanish bottoms.
2. Spanish goods in foreign bottoms.
3. Foreign goods in Spanish bottoms.
4. Foreign goods in foreign bottoms.

Excessive duties practically wiped out trade under the last head. England, always ready to encourage her foreign trade in all parts of the world, soon built steamships to be operated under the Spanish flag and manned by Spanish officers and sailors, than whom there are none better in the world. Taking advantage of the third proviso of the Spanish tariff for the English manufacturers, she loaded the English-owned Spanish steamers at Liverpool for Santander, Cadiz, or Barcelona. These cargoes discharged, the steamers were reloaded, under the first proviso, with Spanish merchandise for Cuba; but this 'Spanish' merchandise was largely the product of English factories which had been established in Spain, and England was the gainer still. These cargoes having been discharged in Cuba, the steamers proceeded in ballast to some American port — New Orleans, Savannah, Charleston, or New York — there loaded with cotton or wheat for Liverpool or Spain, and in due course returned to Cuba with cotton goods or flour



MRS. ATKINS



made from these raw materials. Thus the United States threw the game into England's hands, and not only deprived her manufacturers of just so much business, but paid freight on the raw materials to English-owned Spanish steamers for a distance of some five thousand miles as against twelve hundred and fifty had she shipped them direct from New York to Havana. There were also regular lines of Spanish steamers from Holland, France, and Belgium, carrying cargoes from those countries, which were entered under the third proviso of the tariff. In this way, for more than a century Spain controlled both the commerce and the carrying trade for Cuba. This repressive policy was an important factor in the decline of the Island's prosperity, which had been at its height just before the Ten Years' War. Then Cuba, known for centuries as the 'Ever Faithful Isle,' was still pouring a stream of gold into the Spanish treasury, and Havana was one of the commercial centres of the new world. Its harbor was crowded with the sail of all nations, but there was good reason for the United States flag being a small factor in that shipping, as she assessed such high duties on all imports that her cost of production was raised above that of other countries, and her tariff upon imports in Spanish bottoms was prohibitive. As a consequence she sold little or nothing but coal and lumber to Cuba. Little I thought then that I should be instrumental in changing the aspect of this world commerce by helping to frame a reciprocity treaty which, through a

readjustment of tariffs, should secure the greater part of the Cuban business to the United States.

During 1884 I went frequently to New York and Washington on business connected with the proposed reciprocity treaty, for then, and in all later years, I was in favor of reciprocity, or any other tariff adjustment that would stimulate and simplify trade between the United States and Cuba, each a natural market for the other. On December 9, 1886, when I made my first public address on conditions in Cuba, before the Merchants Club of Boston, I ended the discourse with the question: 'After the experience of the past twenty years in trying to foster domestic production, is it not time that the refining interests and the consumers should receive some consideration in the shape of the abolition or reduction in the duties on foreign sugars?'

In a press interview on January 19, 1885, Mr. H. P. Finley practically agreed with my views:

Reciprocal treaties are a neutral ground upon which free traders and protectionists can meet. Unless I am greatly mistaken the Democratic platform recommended a closer commercial relation between the United States and the other fifteen countries of America, and President Cleveland acquiesced in this policy of reciprocity in his letter of acceptance. Let the treaty be accepted or rejected on its merits alone, and, in Heaven's name, whatever may be done, let it be done quickly. The present suspense and anxiety are intolerable. Men do not know which way to turn and cannot find any ease until they know the final result. I assure you the effect of this delay is very prejudicial

to business. In conclusion let me say that if we refuse to accept the treaty, Germany and not we will be the gainer. To see sugar cane producing countries lose their trade is her great desire, as she is the great foster mother of beet sugar.

In 1884 business was also bad in the United States. I have come across a letter written to Father by Uncle Edwin in which he says: 'I wish business might brighten up and look as cheerful as nature. A fellow who has a fine place in the country said yesterday that every day he thought that things were going to the devil until he got home again; that he invited every poor devil he heard of to come out and see that the Almighty was still running things in the country and had only given up the cities.' It was Uncle Edwin's opinion that 'more fear to live and less to die would be better for all.' He wound up cheerfully with a story of Blaine. 'Tell him to go to hell,' snapped an opponent of Blaine, who was running for President against Cleveland. When reported to Blaine, he remarked: 'That's the first invitation I have had to visit Democratic headquarters.'

My father and Secretary Blaine had some mutual railway interests. One day Blaine came into the office and, while he was waiting to see my father, I had quite a conversation with him on the subject of the sugar duties. I said to him that if the United States would offer reciprocal arrangements to Spain, according her a reduced duty on Cuban sugars in exchange for concessions upon our exports

to Cuba, all the other sugar-producing countries, including Germany, would be anxious to obtain similar treatment; and it would open a wide field for the development of the export business of the United States. Blaine expressed much interest in the suggestion and asked many questions regarding the sugar production of the various countries. This conversation brought results several years later when a reciprocity tariff agreement was finally reached.

My letters to Father gave an account of our troubles in the winter of 1884:

February 14

Everybody is alive to the need of something being done by Spain. Avendaño tells me that the Captain-General has himself recommended to the Home Government the removal of the export taxes. Petitions and letters are being sent; there is a strong popular feeling, but no organization as yet as far as I can find out. Matters look very bad and the present low prices must bring trouble to many at the end of the present crop. . . . In regard to Torriente's I have already written you in full. I read your letter to Cacicedo and told him it was next to impossible for Cuban planters to produce sugar in competition with other parts while subject to the present heavy taxation; and it was very well for him to uphold Spain in its course while he could draw on us to pay his taxes, but the time would come, unless some action was taken by his Government, when we should refuse further assistance.

It is a question of making both ends meet on muscovado estates. Had we better nurse them along hoping for something to be done by Spain, or allow the properties to be abandoned for want of funds?

Torriente wants very much that we assume Soledad Estate; has not mentioned price; it stood on their books January first I think \$315,000. It seems that the recent marriage of one of Don Estéban's daughters has made all the partners somewhat fearful of what might happen in case of their senior's death, and they would like to see our account in some way secured. Cacicedo suggests that Murray might be induced to take charge of the estate in our interest, which would be a very good plan if he could be induced to do so, for he would make a good business manager. He is honestly reliable, and with an experienced foreman under him for the agricultural work should do well.

Francke of the Pioneer Works has been after me the past two years to buy a triple effect and now says that work is scarce and he will make a low price for a pan with suitable pumps for a 4000 hogshead triple to put in later. Probably a pan with centrifugals and all appurtenances would cost, set on the estate, some \$40,000, including labor, materials. I think the Pioneer Works have all or part of machinery on hand ordered by some one who failed before delivery.

I wish you would write me what you think of the plans, whether or not I shall move in the matter. Meanwhile I will see what Murray would say. As a muscovado estate, I would not advise taking it. With good weather the estate ought to make 2000 hogsheads next year.

February 19

I have just received yours of the 13th; sorry to note the dullness in Boston. I wrote you by last mail regarding Torriente's wish to transfer Soledad to us. Thinking it over since, my impression is that under the present financial condition of the Island it would be prudent for us to take the property in our name, even

should we allow Torriente to continue in his management as at present. In case of a general panic here it would be well for us to have this security, and might serve as a protection to Torriente. It is a critical time here, but I hope some change for better may come and I think that Montalvo and Torriente will pull through all right.

Mr. Jova had become heavily indebted to us, and just when it had seemed likely that he would go under completely, he had had the luck to win, in true dime-novel fashion, a state lottery ticket for half a million dollars. I proposed to have at least part of our debt out of this windfall; Jova was nearly as determined to keep it for himself, and as a fact made over three hundred thousand to his family so that we could not touch it. The dispute went on through the winter as to whether Mr. Cabada (to whom Jova was also heavily indebted) and I could get a hundred thousand from him in cash, the balance to be secured by mortgage or otherwise. Cabada and I had the assistance of Mr. George Fowler and later of Juan Jova; the whole transaction is illustrative of the truth that in Cuba then it was worth any effort to make private settlement rather than take even a clear case into court where interminable delay and crooked practice of the law were sure to bring you to a worse result than you could negotiate yourself.

February 26

I have been pressing Jova for the lottery matter and came to an explosion with him last Saturday, for

although he would not make any statements to me, he virtually admitted that his intention was to crowd us to a final settlement before paying over any cash. I fear his luck has upset him and he is tempted to be dishonest regarding his debts. Both Mr. Fowler and Mr. Cabada have the same fears regarding him, although we are all doing our best to keep him straight and he has to-day admitted to me that it was his intention to apply the \$100,000 to our and Cabada's indebtedness.

The Island is getting in a very critical condition; it brings out the real character of everybody and most of them have so little pluck that they are ready to lie down and have circumstances kill them. I do not wish to write too gloomy a letter nor have you think that I am losing courage, but want you to understand the real condition of things.

March 4

I am almost discouraged by one mishap following another in such quick succession.

I think Murray can be induced to take charge of Soledad. Will you write me what you think best to do? You say it might be well if we can get the estate at a low figure; as it is Torriente's most promising estate it would be foolish for them to deprive themselves of it, except they could reduce their debt to us by its value; their idea is some \$350,000, while I think about \$300,000; it stands them, in say, January 1, 1884, \$315,000; the estate comprises nearly 4500 acres, has first-class buildings and mill; the railroad alone cost some \$25,000, and there is cane for about 2000 hogsheads next year with good weather; it is not a question of buying an estate cheap, as we virtually own it already. I wish you would look at Torriente's account and consider the future chances of an open account without security and the present condition of the Island. I do not want

an estate by any means, but if it is a question of that or possibly much worse, I prefer the former.

Please do not think that I am urging this matter on you too far. I am sure if you were here you would think as I do, and I have made all these inquiries only to put the matter clearly before you. If you think I am wrong I will say no more about it, but I would like you to consider the matter carefully with Cumings and give me definite instructions. There is little money to be had and there will be many failures when the crop is over. While I have no fear of Torriente, he, like others, will be subject to the general distrust and we should not overlook the fact.

March 18

Have just received your cable of to-day. Is there no hope of the sugar market? I am very glad to get your prompt instructions about Soledad, for undesirable as it may be, I am satisfied it is the only thing for us to do and I will proceed to carry out your instructions at once.

March 20

I have been all day arranging with Torriente. I tried my very best to arrange the matter at \$325,000, but finally compromised for \$335,000. I am afraid you will not feel quite satisfied, nor do I, but I felt the importance of making an amicable settlement and closing the matter up; we were bound to make some loss in Torriente's account. If times come more favorable, the estate will be in a better position than Torriente to reduce its balance; and if times are unfavorable, Torriente could never have paid so heavy an amount. I have fixed the first of June to take charge of the estate as being the easiest time to liquidate its accounts.

There are over one hundred head of cattle on the

potrero besides the working oxen of the estate. I should not have considered \$325,000 an unreasonable amount. Both Joaquin Torriente and Joaquin Cacedo, now that the bargain has been made, I feel sure will look after our interests even better than their own. I shall leave the matter of deeds to them and probably give a power of attorney to Mr. Fowler to formally receive the estate in our name as is required by law.

Poor Rosa Jova died yesterday after two months' illness. Your letter to Mr. Jova I have put aside for a time; he is almost beside himself with grief and fatigue.

March 23

I have closed with Mr. Murray, who will take charge of the estate not later than the first of June. We may need his services in May in order to better prepare for the setting of the machinery. The arrangement with Mr. Murray is \$3000 salary guaranteed, with five per cent additional on the net results of each crop. Last night I returned from Soledad. I have closed the contract with Francke, and laid out the plans for installation of the machinery in the big purging house. They all say that the work of installation will be comparatively cheap. The measurements of the buildings have been taken, and drawings are to be made by my request for an apparatus of 6000 hogsheads. So if at any time we want to increase we will know exactly what pieces are wanted, where they are to be placed, and there will be no changes or tearing out of work already done.

The two boilers will be exclusively for the boiling in the new pan. One might have been sufficient, but you know the boilers have to be cleaned every fifteen days and this would stop the grinding had we not a second boiler, and in case of any accident to one we can use the other. A stoppage on a sugar estate, if only for a few

hours with two or three hundred hands employed, is a serious matter. I was very much pleased with the general appearance of the estate.

Murray's ideas regarding systematizing the work seem to me excellent; he will find an experienced man to take charge of the negroes and the field work. I am looking for a good American engineer and machinist to take the next crop off. Francke is to provide a pan man or sugar master and has already written for one. Then Murray will get an experienced locomotive engineer and an experienced trackman, who will also be a carpenter; each one of these will be responsible to Murray for the smallest detail of his department, and we will have a full set of books kept on the estate and I hope with time to have them as well systematized as those of the refinery.

I calculate upon 2000 hogsheads next year; with good weather we might do better; of these 35 per cent are of colonos. We must defecate in the present open trains and they cannot do better than 2500 hogsheads. It would not be prudent to undertake contracts with other colonos the first year, as Murray will have all he can attend to in organizing the estate. When we want more cane and can be sure of grinding it with profit, we can probably make arrangements with Rosario, Josefa, or Santa Rosalia, all of whose owners have approached me regarding it, but we must go slowly and surely with such business. . . .

I am fighting away with all Cienfuegos to keep the drafts down and cannot do more unless we abandon the estates or let the shippers fail. The poor ones we must drop; the good ones will come out all right in the end, for these prices will make reduced crops and increased consumption all over the world. Spain must do something to relieve the Island, and as soon as better times come those planters who have good property and

can get through this year will be in position to benefit by any improvement.

April 1

I settled up with Jova last night very badly indeed and after great trouble. He has shown himself very ugly, so much so that I finally lost my temper and we would have come to blows had it not been for Mr. Fowler and Mr. Cabada. I knew only too well that through the courts it would be very doubtful if we got any cash, and Mr. Fowler urged me strongly to settle, and make sure of the money. I think his advice was right, hard as it is to lose so heavy an amount. He pays 56 cents on a dollar to Cabada and ourselves agreeing to give us one fourth of the lottery ticket, which he has not yet cashed, or shown any signs of doing so. We shall have to cash this ourselves and money is so scarce in Havana there is nobody there who will discount it, so I may have to take it North and express it to Madrid to some banking house unless I should be so fortunate as to sell it in Havana.

Mrs. Atkins vividly remembers the adventure of that lottery ticket, and often recalls how I brought it to the Torrientes' and put it in a trunk, then went off to one of the plantations for the night, leaving her on guard. Several evening callers chose the occasion to regale her with stories of robberies in the neighborhood, and Josefa slept in the room with her for company. About five in the morning, hearing the slats of the sitting-room blinds turn, she was sure the robbers had arrived, but it was only Josefa peering out at the weather to see if she could go to Mass. We were unable to cash the ticket in

Havana, so when we went North Mrs. Atkins sewed the lottery ticket into the lining of my vest. Outside the harbor at Cedar Keys we were transferred to a small boat and then for some reason into another. There were only a few passengers and one of them was a consumptive. A gale came up and the man at the helm was heard to say: 'Another turn like that, and she'll go over.' Mrs. Atkins began to think that there was a curse on that lottery ticket. We landed at 1 A.M. with no one on the wharf to transfer our luggage, so we went up into the town for help and returned with a mule cart and one old negro. We all walked to the hotel where we got a couple of hours' sleep. At five we were aroused to have coffee before starting again on our journey. The train managed to crawl out into a swamp and stick fast. Mrs. Atkins fed the consumptive on cold beef tea. When we got to New York, Mrs. Wrisley guarded the ticket all one morning by sitting on it; but it was finally deposited with Kidder, Peabody & Company, who collected the money. The Jovas have never since been prosperous; whether on account of their lottery prize none can say, but Mrs. Jova from the first felt it would bring ill luck.

CHAPTER VII

SOLEDAD

IN May, 1884, Mr. J. S. Murray went to Soledad to take charge of the estate. I had known Mr. Murray for many years and had first met him in 1877 at the American Consulate when he was supervising engineer of the Cienfuegos & Santa Clara Railway, afterwards the Cuban Central. He was a native of Pittsburgh, but through long residence in Cuba was thoroughly acquainted with local conditions, understood the people, and spoke Spanish fluently. He made a very effective manager of Soledad for a number of years, until failing health forced him to retire.

The vivienda or dwelling-house at Soledad was built in 1848 and was just opposite the mill. The walls were several feet thick, for it was built with a view to defence in case of an uprising of negroes. I believe in 1848 there were seventeen hundred slaves on the estate with only half a dozen whites in command. Old Juan Sarria was master then and it is said he evinced his impatience with a waitress by murdering her and throwing her body over the balcony into the patio. In my day, when the estate was working under Escarza, the receiver, the mayoral in charge seemed just as primitive a man. He was a Gallego, Don Pedro García, the picture of a pirate, with a black beard reaching to

his waist. He had been a slave trader in his earlier career, and when he overheard my conversation about putting in some modern machinery, he strongly urged me not to do so, but to fit up an expedition for Africa and allow him to bring back a cargo of negroes. This was years after the slave traffic was stopped and slavery abolished, but Don Pedro had evidently not heard of that.

Once I was visiting the estate with Joaquin Cacicedo, who was a captain of the Spanish Volunteers and had brought with him a lieutenant of the Civil Guard to investigate complaints of cattle stealing at Soledad by negroes. The negroes had hidden in the woods in what was known as the San Mateo district, now part of the Colonia Belmonte. This lieutenant, with two or three of his men, went into the woods looking for negroes, and later returned to breakfast. When asked whether he had found them, he said he had and that they would give no more trouble, as he had hanged them all on trees. He had a boyish, smiling face and it did not seem possible that he had committed such an act.

Before Mr. Murray took charge at Soledad, the machinery had been furnished from Glasgow and from the Adams Foundry in Boston. The milling machinery was strong and thoroughly built and consisted of but one three-roller mill by which not more than seventy per cent of juice was extracted from the cane. It had a walking beam engine which had been in use for some fifty years. When



SOLEDAD MILL, 1884



SOLEDAD VIVIENDA, 1884



we replaced it with more modern machinery, it was still in good condition and we sold it to another estate. It had been furnished by my old friend, Mr. William Rose, agent of the Glasgow firm of Murless & Watson, who took great pride in its record. Mr. Rose visited me almost yearly. He was a man of the old-fashioned type, of sterling integrity, excellent judgment, and wide experience. He was held in high esteem all over the Island.

On these old estates the juice was boiled in the open kettles known as 'Jamaica trains.' The fuel was bagasse, but wood was used in starting the fires. The bagasse was fed to the furnaces under the boilers by hand; and on many places unruly negroes were used for this work. I remember seeing one such negro working in chains with a heavy iron ball attached to his ankle to prevent his running away; but such cases were exceptional. The negroes as a rule were well fed and did not seem to suffer from the long hours of labor, which in the grinding season sometimes ran up to eighteen hours a day. They used to sing at their work, perhaps to keep themselves awake. The boiled juice was bailed into shallow pans, where after some days it crystallized into massecuite, which was then put into hogsheads to drain off the molasses. The hogsheads were then packed hard with dry sugar trodden down generally by the fattest of negro women with their bare feet. Some refiners now advertise: 'No hand touches these sugars.' The same could have been said in earlier days! Once when I visited Soledad before

we took possession, I saw a naked negro boy standing in the tinglado and bailing molasses into a bucket, which an older negro then carried on his head to be emptied into hogsheads. No doubt all these primitive customs added to the flavor of the molasses, which, however, cleared itself largely from impurities by fermentation. Years afterward some good New England housewives used to ask me why they could never get the old-fashioned Cienfuegos molasses for their gingerbread!

The changes made in the machinery were substantially as indicated in the last chapter, but in July we also purchased from Francke on favorable terms (\$30,000 payable in annual sums of \$10,000) a triple effect, which completed our plant and made Soledad for that period a thoroughly equipped centrifugal central. This order comprised one triple effect, two scum tanks, two boilers, six defecators, two clarifiers, and the necessary pumps. Mr. Murray patched up the old locomotives for temporary use, and a new one was ordered for delivery in November. Before the crop season, I sent out a German sugar master, Sassa, recommended by Francke. It was a wise move, I thought, as he was to run the machinery guaranteed by Francke for one year. I also employed an engineer and an expert chemist. A chemist was an innovation in those days, and I carefully explained his duties to Mr. Murray. A pontoon bridge was constructed over the Caunao River to facilitate the transportation of cane from the Josefa Estate to

the mill. A small steamboat was also purchased for towing sugar lighters down the river to Cienfuegos.

I wrote constantly to Mr. Murray all through the summer and fall, giving directions for carrying on the work and outlining my policy. As far as possible we tried to systematize the work, getting the best available men for heads of departments, knowing they would save their salaries. I hoped to make the estate in a measure self-supporting, and in order to do this, I ordered the planting of gardens and the carrying of cattle on the potreros. I wanted every acre to pay something. It was my desire not only to do as well as others, but a little better as regarded economy of labor, saving of waste, and increase of yield, and I knew that only a thorough organization and a careful study of results would accomplish my end. Mr. Murray encountered all kinds of difficulties: delay in setting up the machinery, trouble with colonos, etc.; but he proved himself capable of meeting and overcoming every difficulty, and in January, 1885, we were ready to start the mill.

Mrs. Atkins and I went to Soledad soon after the work had commenced and took up our residence in the upper story of the vivienda, where we had our bedrooms, living-rooms, and dining-room. The business of the place was conducted on the lower floor. Saddles, bridles, and guns were kept in the huge hall, while the numerous rooms were used as offices and bedrooms. Two guards with loaded rifles were stationed day and night on either side of

the big front door. The stable was near the house; and to prevent the horses from being stolen at night, they were tethered directly under our windows. Except for a small garden we had no cultivated ground, and abandoned cane fields stretched in every direction. Between the house and the mill, the bagasse was spread on the ground to dry and the negro women could be heard singing their native African songs as they raked it into long rows.

The negro quarters were in long double rows of stone huts with streets between. The doors were the only openings in the huts for light and air, and therefore most of the household work was done on the porch or in the street. In the 'eighties when we arrived at Soledad for our winter stay, the negroes expected a holiday and gifts of shirts, dresses, and bright bandana handkerchiefs. We, the owners, sat upon a kind of throne constructed by the negroes and surrounded with the Spanish flag and coat-of-arms. The negroes brought us little presents of chickens, eggs, bananas, and so on. As the procession filed in front of us, many of the older African negroes would kneel and kiss our hands and feet, asking our blessing. Looking back now over a period of more than forty years, that seems like another world. These negroes addressed us as father and mother, and always called me master. They really considered themselves as our children; and while they would always steal any property of the estate, they would never, under any circum-



NEGRO QUARTERS, SOLEDAD, 1884



CHINESE QUARTERS, SOLEDAD, 1884



stances, touch any personal property, which they seemed to look upon as sacred. Money or jewelry could be left about with doors unlocked, with a feeling of perfect security. During these annual celebrations, beer and occasionally a glass of rum was furnished; and a tango, much like the tangos now in vogue in this country, was always danced to the beating of the tom-tom. Often these dances resulted in a test of endurance. The men were stripped to the waist and the women were covered only by a shirt and skirt. I have seen men dancing with the sweat pouring off them and the negro women, catching the step, dance in with a bath towel and rub them down without interruption of the dance, which was continued until one party or the other became exhausted.

The negroes on the estates, being mostly imported Africans, came from many tribes and kept up their tribal customs for years after slavery was abolished. We had at Soledad Caribbees, Congos, Guinea negroes, and many others. Each tribe had its king and queen, and maintained many superstitious rites and customs. Among the older negroes was a little Congo, under five feet in height, who said he was the son of a prince in Africa and that he had been kidnapped and sent to Cuba as a slave. After the Spanish Government required a certificate, termed a 'cedula,' from every one, this little negro complained that he never received one and was known as 'Sin Cedula.' He walked with a cane and we did not consider him able to do any

work. But many years afterward, he took charge of a gang of boys and walked with them to the fields with his hoe and worked all day. The journey back and forth twice daily was fully eight miles. He was very proud to be paid in silver dollars, which was probably the first money he had ever seen.

There were other interesting characters among these negroes, particularly an old African slave named Limbana. She also came from the Congo district, and like all her countrymen was of very short stature, four feet and six or eight inches high. Her arms were so long they reached to her knees when she was standing erect, which was very seldom, as long service in the cane fields with the machete had doubled her over. It was quite as easy for her to go upon all fours as upon her feet. Limbana always wore a bright-colored turban, in the folds of which she carried cigar stumps, bits of jerked beef, and other valuables. She attached herself to our family at once, and assumed the duty of sweeping up the floors. She also assumed the part of court jester for the entertainment of our guests. When we first established the telephone, Mr. Murray's son, Santiago, was testing it with me over a wire some two miles in length. As we were talking, Limbana came up and I called her and put the instrument to her ear. Of course she had never heard of such a thing in her life, and she jumped up nearly two feet, coming down flat on her back. She then accused the chemist of witchcraft, saying that he had locked Don Santiago in the box, and begged



MR. MURRAY AND LIMBANA



SPANISH OFFICERS



NEGRO RELIGIOUS PROCESSION

him to let him out. For years afterward she would entertain our guests with a description of the conversation over the telephone, and was always convinced that it was a manifestation of witchcraft, in which all the African negroes firmly believed.

I remember a ride I had that first winter with the Civil Guards. It was one of my opera-bouffe experiences with Cuban law, and probably could have been avoided by the payment of a bribe had I been inclined to follow that clearly indicated course. In this case we had had a small cane fire at Soledad, started by a spark from the locomotive, with a loss perhaps of a few cartloads of cane. The local authorities saw fit to try me out with an 'investigation,' and, instead of sending to the estate to make an inquiry, they had summoned not only me but our manager and engineer — and in fact all our officials, who could ill be spared in the grinding season — to appear at Cumanayagua to give testimony. I refused to obey, and replied that if they would send to Soledad they could obtain all necessary information. Again they demanded my presence and added that if I did not come of my own will, the Civil Guard would be sent to fetch me. I agreed to that so long as they did not interfere with the men who were necessary to the working of the estate.

A little while after, a negro woke me up at two o'clock in the morning with a message that a lieutenant was outside with orders for my arrest. Mrs. Atkins got me some coffee, and I started off

with my guard on a three hours' ride through the beautiful moonlight. They have since built a road up to Cumanayagua, but it was then a rough bridle path, and we had to ford the river which was full of slippery rocks. Once there, I demanded to be taken instantly to the judge. But the lieutenant demurred, and said I must wait until office hours. I replied that if he wouldn't take me I would go alone; that as the judge had got me out in the middle of the night, he must get out of his bed to take my testimony. I pounded on his door and found, not the judge, but his secretary, who also informed me that I must wait for office hours. At once I had recognized the fellow. 'Look here,' said I, 'I know you and have been looking for you for a couple of years. You are the fellow who stole a lighter full of sugar from San Ygnacio. Now I am going straight back to Soledad, and if you ever again try to interfere with me in any way, I'll have you arrested as a thief and put into jail.' He apologized and I got home in time for breakfast; all much to the amusement of my escort who were entirely in sympathy with me.

The Civil Guard at that time was an effective force of rural police, who went about the country in pairs and managed to keep fairly good order. They usually took justice into their own hands, instead of turning their prisoners over to the courts. The prisoners were almost invariably released if they could pay a sufficient bribe. But many of the officers of this Guard were good men,

and they did all in their power to protect property-owners and also the country people if they were known to be deserving. The men were mounted and well-uniformed, with scarlet trimmings on their striped linen coats and cockades in their panama hats.

Mrs. Atkins will never forget that first winter at Soledad. She was then only twenty-three years old, and it is a mystery to me now how she ever put up with the dirt and inconvenience, and the incompetency of the negro servants. But she went through with it all cheerfully, and soon brought order out of chaos. For one thing she introduced an innovation in the way of some panes of glass in the doors and windows; for in Cuban fashion, there had been none in the house. In case of rain shutters and doors were fast closed, and we sat in stuffy darkness or lighted kerosene lamps. Screens were, of course, unknown, and as doors and windows were always open unless it were raining, the house swarmed with mosquitoes and with flies, which were kept from the dining-table at meal times by a home-made punkah of strips of newspaper suspended over the table and kept in motion by means of a rope operated by a small negro boy. But the fleas were our worst trial; myriads infested the building, and it took several years of patient enforced cleanliness to get rid of them.

Mrs. Atkins has written her impressions of this first winter at Soledad and I shall quote from her account:

I had made one visit to Soledad with Mr. Atkins and the Cacicedos when old Don Pedro was in charge of the estate and found it a barbarous-looking place. When we arrived the negroes poured into the house to tell their grievances and to look at their prospective masters. They came into my room while I was dressing and examined my arms with much care and visible disappointment. Finally they told me that I had no nice blue pictures on me. The last visitor had been much decorated. I remember one night when Mr. Cacicedo was called back to town, Clotilde went into her room and found eight negro women lying on the floor to give her protection while her husband was away.

After that experience I looked forward with some dread to taking charge of the house. I shall never forget my feeling as I walked up the stairs the evening of my arrival and saw the long dining-room table set for dinner. On the top of each tumbler was a soiled red napkin. Mr. Murray had made a beginning at cleaning the house, but it was a stupendous task. Had it not been for his help in domestic crises, of which there were many, I think I should have given up in despair. He kept the servants in order and settled the affairs of the negroes, whose marital relations gave him a great deal of trouble. My laundress, for instance, had seven husbands in two years. A few of the negroes were casada por la iglesia (married by the church), but others were continually in trouble and coming to him to adjust their differences.

I had a large family to provide for. There was Mr. Murray and his son, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Stillman and their son Carl, Captain Beal, and one or two others, all living in the house. Then our cousin, Mabel Thaxter, and her friend, Kitty Jennison, came out to spend the winter with us. Passengers from the Ward Line

steamer, which at that time came direct from New York to Santiago, Manzanillo, and Cienfuegos, often came up to Soledad for the sake of seeing a sugar estate. Of course they had to be entertained; and between friends and sight-seers from the North and officers of the Civil Guard dropping in to meals every few days, we nearly always had twenty or more at the table.

I had a succession of cooks, for they objected to the cleaning-up process. They had an unpleasant habit of going off without warning and then Mr. Murray would have to bring in one of the negroes on the place who knew something about cooking until another cook could be found. Our butler was always a young Spanish conscript, who managed to get leave of absence from the army. They were glad enough to get away and have decent quarters and food. I had a little mulatto girl as my special maid. She was a pretty little thing, but had run wild on the plantation. She finally ran away from us and we heard nothing from her until the next year when a little victoria drove up to the door and some one was lifted out. Julia had come home to die. The other housemaids were a variety of negro women sent in from the fields. They were always honest about money, but would appropriate various articles of wearing apparel. One day Mr. Atkins's suspenders were missing and I told one of the negroes that I wanted them found. Presently they appeared and the woman said they had been found on the hedge. The master must have dropped them off as he rode through!

We had plenty of food such as it was. Our cattle supplied us with meat and were butchered on the place. Before we came to Soledad the cattle were killed just outside the house and the pigs and chickens in the courtyard, but fortunately Mr. Murray had put an

end to that. The greatest inconvenience was the lack of ice. Meat had to be eaten the same day it was killed and all the milk had to be boiled as soon as it came into the house. We had two or three hundred cows, but, as all of them had their calves running with them, we were often short of milk. We ground our own corn meal. A negro woman would sit on the ground and grind it between two round stones. Corn meal porridge was one of our principal articles of diet, until somebody discovered that one of the negroes brought it up to the house in his old felt hat. Though we gave him a pail, the thought of the hat took away our appetite for corn meal for quite a while.

The most difficult thing was to get an adequate supply of household linen. The house was supplied with bright calico sheets and I never could seem to get enough white linen ones for our own use, though we bought and made quantities of them. We supplied the rest of the household, but Mr. Atkins and I slept under the calico ones all that first winter. Once in a while I had to send to the carpenter's shop and have beds or cots made for unexpected guests. None of the beds had mattresses, but in cold weather a cotton comforter was laid over the canvas.

After two or three winters on the estate, we thought we had made Soledad very comfortable, and became quite used to Cuban ways; but in 1887, when Mrs. Wrisley and Rita came out to visit us, Mrs. Wrisley gave a picture of the life from a fresh point of view in a letter she wrote to my sister:

DEAR HELEN:

We're having a lovely visit and are still enjoying the novelty of everything, but, good gracious, what a country! The climate is charming; it is so nice to be



GROUP IN FRONT OF VIVIENDA

Second Row, Mr. Murray, Mrs. Atkins, E. F. A. (right)



warm, you know, while you in the North are hugging about fires and registers. I imagine there has been no change here since your visit unless it may be for the worse. The town looks as if it had been buried for centuries, and had been partly excavated. We went in town the other day and took breakfast with the Fowlers. They were exceedingly kind and hospitable, and *clean*. Then we went to the Torrientes' to dine and spend the night. I never realized Ned's courage until then. To think of bringing a wife out here to spend a winter in that place. He has lived here so long he is hardened to it. Mr. Torriente and Clotilde seem to be very kindly people and they must have wonderful constitutions to have survived their dinners all these years. The soup was a paste of the greasiest grease and vermicelli; then they had a dish of stewed cabbage, peas, etc., called olla. I made a pretence of eating, but it was almost beyond Rita's strength. When a turkey was served stuffed with raisins they must have thought our appetites improving, as the turkey seemed a little like home. We slept in a room like a dungeon, shut up tight. I got Ned to open the window softly, as the old lady seemed so afraid we might 'catch an air.' We were glad to get back to Soledad in the morning. The sail up here is delightful, the river is so still and the banks very pretty. Crabs and long-legged birds seem to be abundant on the shores. We are met at the pier by the locomotive and car, and the armed guard drawn up looks quite like a travelling arsenal. Ned as soon as he steps on shore slings on a rifle and buckles on a pistol. Mr. Julius Brown of Georgia came up with us to spend the night. He evidently was prepared for the worst, as he had three pistols in his three pockets with twenty-five shots. If Espinosa had seen us he would have immediately surrendered I am sure. I hope your mother will come out here. I would like to have her

see how dirty people can be, and live. There is a poor negro girl who belonged to the estate who has come back here to die. Kate is trying to make her comfortable, but I should think it a hopeless task down in the negro quarters. She told Kate she had not been washed for seven months, afraid of taking cold. Kitty took the risk of killing her by ordering her to be bathed. I should think it would be a fine field for a first class missionary out here among the negroes.

The rides about here are delightful. Just imagine me hoisted upon a horse. To add to my youthfulness I am wearing a cambric dress that is shrunk a little short in the wash; so if you hear of my trundling a hoop or skipping rope you need not be surprised. . . . If you could look in here, wouldn't you think your house luxurious!

Yours affectionately

H. W. W.

CHAPTER VIII

GROWTH OF THE ESTATE

FATHER had been in failing health since 1886. In 1887 he made his last visit to Cuba, with Mother and our old friends, Mr. and Mrs. William B. Morrill, who were then living in Atlanta. It will always be a satisfaction to me that he was able to visit Soledad after it had become an Atkins plantation. He retired from business in 1888, and in October of that year he died in Boston. A few months later I wrote Mother from Cuba:

I was glad to get your copy of Mr. Endicott Peabody's letter and resolutions of the Merchants Club. Few men have had so many kind things said and so many tokens of respect as have been said of Father. It is a legacy to me more valuable than all his property, and I realize how much more my advancement to his positions are due to his memory than to myself, although I hope to prove that the trusts given me by his friends have not been misplaced.

. . . This is a beautiful day; in fact the days are all beautiful here. One can hardly feel sad with the sun always shining.

I miss writing to Father very much; he was always so interested in all the little details of the place aside from the business matters. I wish he might know how well everything is working this year. It is a great satisfaction after so much time and thought as we have spent upon the place for four years past. . . . I have not much to write about; everything is going on quietly and well.

In due course I took up most of Father's active interests — in the sugar business, in the Ætna Mills, and in railways. In 1889 I became a director of the Union Pacific, the youngest member of the Board, and was asked to be co-trustee with J. P. Morgan and F. L. Ames of the Omaha Bridge bonds.

In the winter of 1889 and for many years to come Mrs. Atkins could not accompany me to Cuba, for we thought at that time that it was not wise to take little children there. In June, 1889, Robert Wrisley was born; in 1892, Edwin Farnsworth; and in 1894, Helen. The hardest part of these long seasons at Soledad was the separation from my little family. Again and again I wrote Mrs. Atkins, as I did in 1894: 'When I look ahead for some weeks it seems as if I could not possibly stay away from the children so long, but I suppose when I get settled down to work the time will pass quickly and I shall not be so lonesome. The worst feature of my being away is that I miss the babyish ways of the children which they outgrow so soon. It is a great pleasure to watch their progress from day to day.'

As I look back on the years from 1888 to 1894, I see them as a period of great progress for Soledad. In 1890 the McKinley Tariff Law was passed which put sugar on the free list and included reciprocity provisions with Spain in regard to Cuba. I had been working to put through some such law for some years and the reciprocity features were framed on almost the exact lines that I had outlined to

Blaine a few years before. The enactment of this law was a tremendous stimulus to sugar production, and the Cuban crop rose from 632,368 tons in 1890 to 1,054,214 in 1894.

Almost every year some new machinery was installed at Soledad which enabled us to do better work, increasing our production and decreasing the cost of labor. We first installed a new bagasse burner and a carrier which automatically conveyed the bagasse directly from the mills into the burner without being dried. With the installation of the bagasse burner, we burned coal for the first time instead of the two or three thousand cords of wood previously used, not only reducing the cost of fuel other than bagasse, but making more steam from the green bagasse and lowering the cost of labor. A few years later we put in new boilers which burned bagasse entirely, thus solving the important question of fuel. A new pan installed at the same time boiled the sugar in half the time ordinarily required. A new mill and centrifugal gave good results and we worked up to our full capacity. The place was thoroughly organized and everything went like clockwork. One reason for our steady work was the number of Chinamen employed on the place. They were faithful men and never missing from their places.

Owing to our increased production we were able to have higher-salaried men in the responsible positions, and while our crop was large, I had less care than when the crop was much smaller. Our chem-

ist, Wilfred Skaife, took charge of the sugar house and was of the greatest help to me. He was full of new ideas and hit upon a new filtration process, which I realized would mark another point in the history of sugar-making and add new laurels to Soledad. Outside Soledad, the situation was clearing; San Rafael was disposed of to García and credited to his account; and I succeeded in leasing San José, which, two years earlier, I had been obliged to take over from the Torrientes.

I must now go a little ahead of my story to show the development of the places about us, and of the estates that eventually became a part of Soledad.

Caledonia, Limones, Brazo, Cantabria, and Viamones were developed by the Sanchez family; the Sanchez-Yznaga family developed the Vega Vieja, and Juan Galdos, the Santa Teresa. Vacqueria and San Estéban were developed by Barrallaza. San Augustin by Goytesolo, Caracas by Tomas Terry, Veguitas by Porrua. The Sarrias were the largest landowners of all with Soledad, Rosario, Cantabria, San Ygnacio, and San José de Jibacoa.

To trace briefly the future course of these estates, Caledonia was taken over from the heirs of Diego Julian Sanchez, directly by Manuel Blanco and ourselves. In 1889 Guabairo was built up from our half of the estate; later I took over the Blanco half, and still later this portion was turned into the Guabairo management. Limones I bought from the wife of Alfredo Vila, a niece of Diego Julian Sanchez. Another niece, the wife of Juan La Torre,

inherited the Brazo, which we leased and afterward bought. Viamones we also leased from her. Juan Andres Yznaga of Trinidad owned a large tract of land on the Arimao River known as Vega Vieja and the Castillo. Juan Andres sent his son, Carlos, North to be educated under our care, and the homesick boy used frequently to spend a Sunday or a holiday with us in Belmont. He never forgot these attentions and remained a fast friend through his life. After his father's death, I bought his half-interest in the Vega Vieja, which adjoined Soledad and contained the attractive old house, the factory having previously been destroyed in the insurrection. The other half I leased from Carlos's sister, and it was from him and his sister, Diana Barrieta, that I negotiated for the Trinidad Sugar Company, the purchase of Manaca, and the lease of Algaba, Sanchez-Yznaga estates near Trinidad.

The Santa Teresa Estate belonged to Juan Galdos, a brother of the famous Spanish writer. Torriente Brothers took it over as security for indebtedness, to be worked out in a term of years, when it went back to the Galdos family, and later we purchased the place for potreros. Veguitas, also a potrero, was owned by our old lawyer, José Porrua, whom we retired on an annuity after many years of service. We purchased this property from him, and later, many small adjacent ones, turning the whole into a large cattle ranch.

I purchased Vacqueria of the Barrallaza family, and simplified the foundries of Soledad and Hor-

miguero, Elias Ponvert's estate, by transferring to him the portion that lay on his side of the Caunao River and retaining the lands adjacent to that part of Caledonia which had been absorbed by Soledad. This transaction gave Soledad and Hormiguero control of a large tract of land extending from the sea to the town of Cruces. San Estéban, formerly a Terry property, was owned by the heirs of Barrallaza when we leased it from their attorney, my friend Estéban Cacicedo.

San Augustin, a large place about six miles from Montalvo's estate Andreita, belonged to Goytesolo. The great Caracas Estate, a central with a present capacity of three hundred thousand bags, belonged to old Tomas Terry and was in the hands of his heirs up to half a dozen years ago when it was bought by the Cuban Central Railway Company. They did not make a success of it and we bought from them, but Caracas is not a part of the Soledad Company.

I have already told of the Sarria properties, but to complete the story, we bought Rosario in 1900 and united it to Soledad. The property had been burned in 1896 and nothing was left standing but the ruins of the tienda, and the vivienda, which was then occupied by young Domingo Sarria's majordomo. After our purchase we built a railway to give access to the cane lands of Caledonia and Guabairo.

This is the proper place to pay my respects to Captain Beal, whose name is so closely associated

with Guabairo. He was a faithful friend of our family, and in one capacity or another he rounded out fifty-two years in the service of E. Atkins & Company. He was born in Schleswig-Holstein, and was a ship's carpenter by trade. He sailed as seaman, mate, and captain; and on trips back and forth to Cuba he made regular reports on tides and currents to the United States Government. He supervised the building of two of our barques; and after sailing vessels were displaced, we made him supervisor of steamers. When he was at Soledad in the early years, he did a little of everything on the estate. He drilled wells and repaired the great pump; he had charge of transportation and checking at the wharf; and he was an enthusiastic gardener. He grew a great many roses in his garden, as well as raising enough vegetables for the dwelling-house and all the operatives. When we decided to build up a colonia at Guabairo, near Soledad, we started the Captain there, and he became a very skilful cultivator of cane. In 1889 Captain Beal, William Turner, our engineer, and Mr. Murray's son, Santiago, each put in some money and had a third share in the colonia. Captain Beal cleared and planted the land with cane, built a house, and lived at Guabairo for many years.

In 1892 we purchased William Turner's third interest in Guabairo and offered it to Mr. Walter G. Beal, a partner in Bishop & Company, of Cai-barien. Mr. Beal accepted and we were all very glad to have him cast his lot with us, for he had

had many years' experience in Cuba. Although of the same name he was not related to Captain Beal. Mr. and Mrs. Beal often visited Soledad and were liked by every one.

Our work was attracting a good deal of attention and we had many visitors — planters from other parts of Cuba, from the States, Hawaii and other sugar-producing countries; scientists, and engineers. Among the visitors from home, I remember with particular pleasure Mr. Charles Francis Adams, an old friend of Father's, who passed the winter of 1890 at Soledad. We spent a great deal of time in riding over the place, which had now so increased in size and production that it took many days to cover it on a tour of inspection. I wrote Mother about Mr. Adams:

I find him the most genial of men. He is always good-natured and takes things easily, enjoying everything that comes along. His comments upon the general condition of the country and the manufacturing business of sugars are most sound and give me much food for thought. He is a wonderfully clear-headed man, and seems to take in a situation at a glance.

This morning we went to see the old negroes and carried some presents which delighted them. They are mostly Congo negroes and have gone back to their African state and live in contentment and idleness. Poor things, they have earned their rest and lived through many changes from the African woods to our present civilization here, but little they have gained by it and their freedom came too late to be of any value to them.

Everything is so well organized now that the work here gives me no anxiety. I have only to inspect what



(LEFT TO RIGHT) MR. ELISHA ATKINS, CAPTAIN BEAL, MR. MURRAY (STANDING) E. F. A.



has been done and prepare for another year. All my work and trouble in the past are telling now, and our results this year are so far in advance of other places as to almost exceed my expectations. They are a natural consequence of a thorough organization of skilled labor aided by a favorable season. Father would have taken great pride in it had he lived to see it.

Another visitor that winter whom I enjoyed exceedingly was Mr. John M. Forbes. He came out to Cienfuegos in a steam yacht with his son and grandson, Mr. Bowditch, Dr. Coolidge, and others from Boston. I brought them all up to breakfast and they had a first-rate time, the old gentleman in particular. He was seventy-seven years old, but as active as a boy. He looked into everything, was photographed with Limbana, and when he left he said he had not enjoyed a day so much for a long time.

In 1892 my sister Grace and her husband paid me a visit and were very much impressed by the strange things they saw. My sister wrote to Mother of their visit:

Yesterday one of the old volantes stopped at the house — you know how funny they are with the driver riding one of the horses. A lady and small child came into the house to rest. She was on her way to an adjoining estate. Soon after an ox team arrived. This had a canvas awning and in the wagon were the black servants of the family. The *Catalina* brought up an old lady and her daughter who came to the house and joined the others. When they started off, the younger

women were on horseback, then came the volante with the old lady and child, and lastly the ox team.

I forgot to tell you of the funny small boy we met trudging along the country road this afternoon. He might have been five. His only article of clothing was a hat and that was just the color of his skin, dark brown.

Sunday is a leisure day for every one. All through the forenoon I heard a voice calling numbers. The Chinamen were spending their Sunday in gambling.

I thought of you much on Tuesday, for it was my birthday. I waked that morning in Cienfuegos. The whole air in the distance seemed to be full of the sound of roosters (I called them), but Ned said they were fighting cocks. It was dark when we rose and as I was ready before the others I went out on the balcony and saw the red light grow behind the Trinidad Mountains as the sun rose. It was beautiful. Isn't it curious that there is no twilight or dawn, but you pass so quickly from night to day?

During their visit we had a fire at Guabairo.

Last night while we were at dinner notice came of a fire at Captain Beal's. It did not burn very much, fortunately, but I got out the men and started out with a train; it took only ten minutes which I thought was pretty good proof of discipline, particularly as neither Mr. Murray nor the mayoral were here. I called for the different heads and the guards, and while I was changing my clothes, the train was got out, men furnished with machetes, and horses saddled. I went by train with the men and although we lost no time, the guards made a short cut and reached there before us. They were showing off a little, and as I stepped from the train they were drawn up on dress parade at the side of the track to receive me, old Quintana among them, but

his horse was most dead, for Quintana weighs over two hundred pounds now; I am not sure that even with my light weight I could have kept their pace for three miles at night. . . .

We started our electric lights inside the buildings a few days ago; they work well and the place looks very pretty at night; now we are putting up some arc lights on the bately.

Of course I made my usual calls on friends in Cienfuegos and after a visit to town, wrote Mother:

. . . Cienfuegos has taken quite a step in improvement during the year past. Last night I walked down to the Plaza; the new theatre [given to the city by the Terry family] was lighted up by electricity, and some performance was going on there. Next the theatre the 'Liceo' has built a club house, which will be opened with a grand ball to-morrow (Sunday) night; between the church and the Spanish Bank is a new and very nice café with tables in front; in the theatre is another, open to the street; at the lower end of the Plaza is the Artisans' Club, also with its café; at the side of the Governor's house where the Volunteer guard was, the Casino Español is putting up a fine building, so the Plaza will be the important place of the town. The hotel continues to improve, the restaurant being crowded at meal times; they have some nice new marble baths in the patio; and the café has been nicely refitted and has interior rooms for ladies; they have put up some thirty new houses during the year, and you would hardly recognize the town now; the shops have braced up also and have quite an important air. All this is due to a rapidly increasing crop on the large sugar estates in the district; although they are few in number, they furnish business and employment for every one.

I called upon the Torrientes in the evening; I found them unchanged and sitting by themselves in the same rocking-chairs where they sat twenty years ago, when they took me, a homesick boy, into their family and treated me so kindly; there they have sat for twenty years through war and peace, prosperity and adversity, undisturbed by what was going on in the world, or even in the next street, and there they will sit with the same quiet patience until they are called to join the great majority in the next world. Their family have mostly gone before them, friends are scattered, their old slaves and servants have left them, but there they sit in the dim light, rocking, with only their canaries and turtle doves to keep them company.

I had the usual breakfast at García's and tea at the Fowlers'; all inquired for you and the 'gracioso' Bob.

Joseph and Oscar Stillman were visitors at Soledad. The Stillmans were brothers and Joe was one of my earliest friends and remains so to this time. He was considered one of the most competent refiners in the United States, and he and I together were running the Bay State Refinery. He had more capacity and much more steadiness than Oscar, who was a mechanical genius. I remember a story of Oscar's knowledge of machinery. On a certain estate the machinery stuck and could not be made to run by the resident engineers and experts. Oscar was offered a thousand dollars if he would come to the estate and set the thing going. He stood looking at the machine for a few moments, with his hands thrust in his pockets, then called for a bit of putty with which he stopped up a little leak

in an exhaust pipe. That was all that was needed, but Oscar got his thousand dollars.

We had our trying times, and I well remember one winter when everything seemed to go wrong. To begin with, influenza was prevalent and I had never known so many cases of sickness, which varied from ophthalmia to 'jimjams,' all of which I was expected to treat. Joaquin Torriente was seized with a very severe heart attack at the estate one morning, and we worked over him for two hours before a doctor and Cacicedo arrived. And that day, to add to the confusion we had a break in the mill house, a flange on one of the old rolls which caused us a stoppage of a whole day. Then a certain Sunday was crammed full of excitement when the major domo's wife gave birth to a child, and old Mr. Bremer was suffering from something or other very like a chill. I concluded that he was threatened with apoplexy, as he had been drinking, and put hot water on his feet and cold water on his head. Then one of the guards told me that he thought one of the house servants was dying, but she proved to have an acute attack of rheumatism; and as I couldn't cure rheumatism, I let her alone. But most serious of all was Mr. Murray's ill health. I sent him off for several weeks' vacation, taking his place as manager. The work was made harder by the mayoral's absence and a mix-up at the sugar house. We had two sugar boilers in succession who drank and one dropped a strike one night before it was cooked. Oscar Stillman and his wife were staying

with me that winter, and in this emergency Oscar helped out by taking the watch at the pan for three nights till Pat Leonard, who had been with us before, came over from Parque Alto. Old Pat was delighted to come back again. He was very proud of his Spanish and made the Chinamen understand very well, but I was amused to hear him say one night, 'Isadore, kape yer eye on numero cinco.' I was tired out by the end of the winter by the many anxieties, all of which were small, but still were troublesome.

There were several changes in the Boston end of the business in 1892. An arrangement had been made with Mr. James H. Shapleigh to become associated with us in the Boston office and to do our selling in three ports — New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. We also sold the Bay State Refinery which E. Atkins had taken over several years before. I had been president and manager of the Bay State Refinery and my friend, Joseph Stillman, was superintendent. We had made a success of it, and the Sugar Trust, through Havemeyer, was desirous of absorbing it. The Trust had also wished me to take charge of purchasing their raw sugars in Cuba, but this, in the end, I refused to do. We did, however, hand over the Bay State, and within a year it was dismantled and the machinery moved to the Standard Refinery at South Boston. When we gave up the Bay State, I was made a director of the Boston Sugar Refining Company at East Boston, of which

Charles O. Foster was the head; Havemeyer sent Stillman to New York and placed him in charge of the Havemeyer & Elder house there.

In 1892 H. O. Havemeyer, then the most powerful man in the sugar business, his cousin, Charles H. Senff, and I became interested in the Trinidad Sugar Company. I had only a minority interest, but to oblige Havemeyer, I became president. The story of Trinidad I will leave for another chapter.

CHAPTER IX

TRINIDAD

TRINIDAD, founded by Velasquez in 1514, is built upon a hillside at the foot of a beautiful range of mountains. Poterillo, the highest peak, rises some three thousand feet directly back of the town. Like all the old settlements, which were practically defenceless against attack by sea, Trinidad was built some miles inland as a precaution against the sudden raids of pirates who for centuries infested the Caribbean. One of my father's cousins, a ship-master like most of his family, was, according to tradition, murdered by pirates somewhere off the coast of Cuba.

Much romance is connected with the history of Trinidad from the days of the Conquistadores. The old planters built expensive and, in many instances, beautiful houses both in the town and upon their estates. The houses were in the Moorish style and so substantially built that many survived the various insurrections which have swept the Island and devastated the plantations. Many of the sugar estates were situated in the valley of San Luis, or Trinidad, which is remarkable for its scenery; and the view of it from the Loma de Puerto at the lower entrance is one of the most beautiful in Cuba. All this region was, and still is,

isolated from other parts of the Island by the mountains; and the old-time planters built a railroad connecting all their estates with the port, Casilda, where for that time large and expensive masonry warehouses were erected.

Our family connection with Trinidad began nearly a hundred years ago when my mother's uncle, Frederick Freeman, about 1835, established himself in business there. My father, visiting the town in 1843, wrote home to Mary E. Freeman, to whom he was then engaged, of a trip around the neighboring sugar plantations with her uncle. I well remember my Grandmother Freeman's stories of the summer visits of her brother Frederick and especially of his wife, Ann Cobb, who brought a slave with her as lady's-maid. They must have come by sailing vessel with a cargo of sugar or molasses consigned to Boston — a voyage then of some twenty-five or thirty days.

Trinidad imported many cargoes of slaves, some of whom were sent across the mountains to Cienfuegos or inland to Sancti Spiritus and other points. Many of these Trinidad slaves, or their descendants, were living during my memory as most devoted family servants. There were famous cooks among them, who had been trained in wealthy families during the prosperous days of Trinidad. My old friend Morrill, who had accompanied me on my first business trip to Cuba, spent the earlier part of his life in Trinidad. He was full of stories of its former glory; and from him and Padre Soriano,

Trinidad's famous priest, I heard the history of many of the old families.

Among those old planters were the Yznaga brothers, of Biscayan origin, who founded Manaca and Las Bocas; Sanchez, of Delicias and Algaba; the Sarrias; Borel, of Guaimiro; Malibran, a Frenchman, who built up Buena Vista; Carret, a Boston man of French blood. Then there was one Baker, who came out from Philadelphia as a journeyman cooper, made a fortune, it is said, in the slave trade, and became a prosperous planter. Whereupon he made pretence to an English title and was known as Sir William Bequer. He spared no expense on his vivienda, and the story goes that he proposed to lay a mosaic of doubloons in the floor of the sala. When the authorities objected that it would be improper to walk upon Spain's coat-of-arms, it was suggested that the doubloons might be set on edge. Of Borel it is related that he was murdered by his family to get possession of the money which he was supposed to have buried at Guaimiro. In accordance with the time-honored methods of burying treasure, he is said to have killed the slave who dug the hiding-place in order to secure secrecy. Be that as it may, in my day, although the frescoes and beautiful hardwood finish of the rooms at Guaimiro remained, the fine tiled floors had been destroyed by the heirs of Borel in their futile hunt for treasure. If there was any, it was never discovered, and the place itself has long been under lease to the Trinidad Sugar Company.

Owing, perhaps, to the early and long-continued isolation of Trinidad, the old families had intermarried again and again, which did not tend to improve the stock. Many of the Yznagas, for instance, were peculiar. One of them built a massive stone tower, still standing on the Manaca Estate, which was to be high enough to give him a view of the sea over the intervening hills. Their height, however, he miscalculated, and the tower was far short of his expectation. His brother, not to be outdone, declared he would dig a well at Las Bocas as deep as the Manaca tower was high; and he had, at least, a useful well to show for his pains. A later inmate of Manaca quarrelled with his wife and vowed that never again would he enter her door; but he kept both his vow and his home by cutting a slit, just wide enough for him to squeeze through, in the bars of a rear window — a device that must have given him great comfort and satisfaction. Another Yznaga was prodigiously fat, a gourmand whose habit it was to sit on his housetop quite naked for the coolness he might get, and there be served with a dinner sufficient for two or three ordinary men.

Old Pedro Yznaga had a young and beautiful wife who fell in love with a handsome young doctor, Cantero, a native of Santo Domingo, whom Yznaga had admitted to his confidence; and when Yznaga died, it was more than suspected that Cantero, with the wife's connivance, had reciprocated hospitality by poisoning his benefactor. In any event, he soon

married the widow, and the two undertook with considerable success to spend the Yznaga fortune. Cantero built a quinta, or country place, a few miles out of town in a beautiful spot at the foot of the Loma del Puerto, which soon became famous for the reckless extravagance of its entertainment. Fifty horses were in the stables; the house, one story, built around interior courtyards, spread over an immense area; the Roman bath, of exquisite marbles, was reached through a beautiful avenue of bamboo. Sometimes as many as a hundred guests were housed there, when the dances lasted all night and for several nights; and in a courtyard cherub heads set in opposite walls spouted — one, gin for the men, and the other, cologne for the ladies. When half a century later I visited the place, it was in ruins, but these fountains were still intact. My father knew Cantero, and wrote once from Trinidad about a ball he had attended where ‘among others I saw for the first time since I have been here Dr. Cantero, whom you have frequently seen in Boston. I found him agreeable and sociable. His wife was with him. She is a plain woman, somewhat older than Cantero, and sat by herself the whole evening. Her husband hardly noticed her, as is the fashion here. She is not much respected by the best people.’ So ended the romance of Madame Cantero, grown plain, and, ‘somewhat older’ than the gay Cantero. The Cantero régime lasted for some fifteen years, and ended about 1860, in a supper whose extravagance was long remem-



TOWER BUILT AT MANACA



VIVIENDA AT GUAIMIRO



bered. Cantero himself was later supposed to have been murdered.

Padre Soriano obligingly warned me to be very cautious in my dealing with the people who, he said, could not be trusted, and offered advice at any time when he could be of service. He, it seemed, was himself not above reproach. Baker, or Bequer, had been such a busy man that, although he had a family, there had never been time for a marriage ceremony with the lady who passed as his wife. At the moment of his death the sorrowing widow sent post-haste for Padre Soriano, to bespeak his prayers and, more important, his advice as to how she might secure the estate of the deceased. The Padre, a man of resource, thought the matter might be arranged — for a consideration. The corpse was bolstered up in bed, and a young Spaniard named Irragone was concealed beneath it; the marriage service was then read by the good Father, and the groom's responses furnished by Irragone. Then, all being in order and the negligence of many years remedied, the new-made widow had her lawful dues; and many years later Joaquin Meyer told me that he could show me on the book of Fritze & Company, Baker's agents of the time, an entry of the sum paid Padre Soriano for his good offices to the widow. Whether purchased with such capital or not, Soriano, in my day, owned a small property near the Trinidad Company, and was, as I have said, disposed to be friendly. His appearance was not in his favor, for he was so wall-eyed you could

not tell which way he was looking, and he was as fat as Friar Tuck. My first sight of him was riding on a very small mule, and although he was then unfrocked he still wore his priest's habit. Irragone had been promised one hundred dollars for his part in the Bequer transaction, but by mistake Padre Soriano handed him a roll of one hundred ounces, or seventeen hundred dollars. Irragone was secretary of the city up to a few years ago, when he committed suicide, probably tired of the monotony of existence at Trinidad.

I found among my grandfather's papers the will of Frederick Freeman, who describes himself therein as of Brewster, Massachusetts, 'formerly of Trinidad in the Island of Cuba, and lastly of San Juan de los Remedios, merchant.' His estate, as shown by a statement annexed, seems to have consisted mostly of bad debts; certain it is that none of the heirs ever profited by payments from Don Pedro Yznaga, Don José Fuentes, Don Juan Hidalgo, of Cienfuegos, 'since dead and left a widow and two children and two sugar plantations.' The most interesting item is a claim on one John W. Baker, of Trinidad. Uncle Frederick states that that claim was for an estate put in his possession by the Governor of Trinidad and authorities of Remedios, amounting to \$32,250, which included 'eight negroes valued at \$400 each.' He charges that Baker got the title through 'connivance and bribery' and is liable for rent at eight thousand dollars per year since 1843.

In the Ten Years' War the plantations were

devastated, many of the factories destroyed, the railroad abandoned, and all but two or three of the estates ceased operating for lack of transportation. The vigorous founders of the great fortunes had died before that time, and their less competent descendants, untrained as they were to business methods and unable to adjust themselves to the new economic conditions, soon lost or squandered all the property they could convert into cash; and at Trinidad, as elsewhere, business came under the control of the bankers who financed the crops — the American house of Eaton, Safford & Fox; the house of a Dane Guillermo Schmidt; the German house of Fritze & Company, and their successors Meyer & Thode.

When I became interested in the Trinidad Sugar Company in 1892, only four of the estates in the San Luis Valley were left; and three of these were in the hands of the two banking houses of Schmidt and Meyer & Thode, which had acquired them through settlement of indebtedness or through marriage with daughters of the old planters. Meyer had married Belencita Yznaga, and Schmidt, a Malibran. The Buena Vista, which included the San José de Altamaza and Las Bocas, was in the hands of the German house; the Cañamabo Estate was Schmidt's; Manaca still belonged to the Sanchez-Yznaga family. All these estates were near the Manati River and shipped their crops by small lighters to Casilda, where they were again lightered to the few small vessels which loaded

annually for Northern ports. I arranged for the Company a long lease of the Buena Vista and San José, which were dismantled, and also Las Bocas and the adjoining lands of Guacuinango and Cayamas. Schmidt's Cañamabo estate was soon after burned in the insurrection of 1895, and never rebuilt. Then we leased the Guaimiro from the heirs of Borel, later purchased Manaca from the Sanchez-Yznaga family, and later still leased their Algaba estate. All through my letters from Soledad are references to the Trinidad Company and its employees — Oscar Stillman, Mr. Morrill, W. S. Turner, Harry Garnett, and others. The Company is now one of the Punta Alegre group, and all the business of the town comes through its transactions.

When the Trinidad Company took over the Yznaga properties, I stopped with the Meyers in the Yznaga town house, a roomy old two-story palace, which originally cost a fortune. It was built on the usual plan, the volante in the front hall, the horses stabled in the patio, where also was a pretty garden. In front were the offices of the firm which in the days of Fritze & Company had transacted a large business. Here I would find Meyer and Thode at their desks at the customary early hour; their clerk Pedro Jansen, who had come out from Bremen as a boy, sitting on a high stool at his old-fashioned desk, pen balanced behind ear — all prepared for the unlikely possibility of something turning up. Every morning a Trinidad newspaper, the size of a pocket-handkerchief, was

laid before the partners. It was read carefully, though it seldom contained any news; and that duty accomplished they would tip their taburetes (hide chairs) against the wall and enter upon a discussion of the business of the day. Once when I tried to join them in like manner, Jansen grabbed the chair, saying that the comejenes (ants) had eaten into the legs. It proved that all but two or three of the chairs, that had stood there for a generation or two, had been thus undermined. Mrs. Meyer was the last of the Yznagas, and died only a few years ago.

Her sister had a more adventurous career. She married a Spanish general, Riquelme, and went with him to Madrid where she became a lady-in-waiting at the court, and her husband a favorite of the dissolute Queen Isabella. The wife, meantime, became enamoured of a young officer, Sebastian Montalvo, a distant relation of the Cienfuegos Montalvos, whom later she married, and the pair returned to Trinidad. Riquelme, when in Cuba, had acquired through his wife the estate known as Aracas de Riquelme. This estate was destroyed in the Ten Years' War; but when Montalvo succeeded Riquelme, he obtained advances from the Trinidad Company to run the property, and then became so deeply indebted to the Company that I was obliged to take a mortgage upon the lands and to take over the place itself on a long-time lease. When I called upon them just before we took possession, Mrs. Montalvo came out to greet me. She was

still a woman of attractive personality and charming manners. But in strong contrast to her earlier days at the court of Madrid, she was living surrounded by negroes, pigs, and chickens, in a small house built in the ruins of the old vivienda. I had also called upon Mrs. Montalvo at the Yznaga town house, which had been built seventy years before by old Pedro, and was still occupied by his grandchildren. They were poor, like every one else, and probably had but few servants; but they took pride in clinging to the old home and managed to keep it in tolerable repair. It was like a palace, the sala some forty feet square with arches and pillars in the centre, and the walls and ceiling beautifully frescoed. The dining-hall might have seated two hundred guests, and everything else was in proportion.

In 1892 I wrote Mother, after a visit to Trinidad:

I returned last night from Trinidad where I had a very pleasant visit. The Morrills are keeping house there and did everything for my comfort. While I was in the valley I rode about seventy-five miles all over the place to make a study of the lands and locations; it is very beautiful there and the views are charming.

I met members of many of the old families when I returned to town, Carret, Lynn, Yznaga, Cantero, Sanchez, some of whom you will remember. The city is very interesting; it is old Spanish style with narrow streets running up and down the hills and many of them as crooked as our old streets in Boston; it is seldom you meet a carriage in any of them, and when by chance one passes, it is a volante (now almost for-

gotten), tied up with ropes and strings, and it is sure to bring every one to the window to see who can be passing. The streets were well paved years ago, and the paving is still good in many of them, but the grass grows now between the stones where formerly there was so much travel.

Most of the estates throughout the valley are abandoned, and there is no communication except on horseback, for the railroad, which cost more than a million dollars, was long ago abandoned. It seems like *Sleepy Hollow*, and I would not be surprised to see *Rip Van Winkle* or perhaps the old rollicking *Cantero* come down out of the mountains to look at our modern place. The people are much interested in our plans and beginning to wake from their long sleep to look about them.

It would be interesting to you to look up the letter which Father wrote you from Trinidad at the time of his first visit there while it was in its prime — that must have been some forty-five years ago — and compare it with this. It seems strange that I should, after all these years, be at the head of a company which undertakes to reestablish in a measure the prosperity of this old place. . . .

As to the Carrets, on a visit to Trinidad in 1893 I was just too late to meet Mrs. Carret, who had died a few days before. She was spoken of as a remarkably strong, energetic woman and seemed to have been respected by all her neighbors. A month later when I was in Trinidad, Mr. Carret came to the estate to see me, and while talking with me dropped dead of heart disease. I worked over him for an hour, not knowing what was the matter, trying to restore life, but it was useless. He had had

a hard life, but had just gathered hope of better times owing to our enterprise; and I was going to assist him, if possible, by straightening out some complications with his relations in Boston. He was buried from our place, and some two hundred persons on horseback followed the body to the grave. Our grandfathers had been intimate friends sixty years before in Boston; and it was strange that he should have died with only me to attend him so far away from the early associations of our families.

Doña Mariquita Sanchez was in rather better case than some of her friends, for her father had put a considerable sum in her name with Moses Taylor, of New York, later Lawrence Turnure & Company; and the old lady was sharp enough never to allow these securities to be used towards bolstering up the declining fortunes of the Cuban estates. When I knew her she was a most interesting old lady, over eighty, but very bright and with a wonderful memory. When a girl, she had been sent to school in the United States, where she knew Dolly Madison; and she told me an interesting story of a visit to the White House. She lived in a fine old house built by her father on the little plaza. There her father and her husband had lived and died; and there she lived on with the family of her son Saturnino, but neither she nor he ever left the house. Nearly all her contemporaries were dead, and the once rich city of Trinidad had fallen into decay about her, but the interior of the house,

furnished in the fashion of two generations earlier, was undisturbed.

It was impossible to make the journey between the two cities overland when the country was disturbed by insurrection, and at any time it was dangerous; but in 1894 I made the trip on horseback with Mr. Walter Beal.

SOLEDAD, 1894

DEAR KATE:

We left Soledad on Tuesday afternoon, Mr. Beal and I, and rode over to Arimao, where the lieutenant of the Civil Guard joined us with a couple of men. It was a charming ride from there on over easy hills and through a pretty country to Gavilan. From there the road was rougher and the hills steeper. Night came on by the time we reached the San Juan River, where we were to spend the night. The potrero where we stayed was in a beautiful little valley near the coast. It is owned by a man named Palacio. He received us politely enough, but seemed to have nothing in his house to offer us. Fortunately we had brought everything we required, and soon had a very fair meal. We had ridden twenty-four miles and were ready for bed early. The others slept, but the fleas kept me awake nearly all night. There were chickens in the room, as we found out in the morning, and as they got up at three o'clock we followed their example and were ready for a start at four, after taking a cup of black coffee. A fresh guard had come to meet us and had ridden since one o'clock from a station in the hills. It was a beautiful moonlight night, much more comfortable than the day. We rode at once into the wildest part of the hills and had climbed some pretty steep places and gone through some very dark spots in the woods before dawn. We reached another guard station by sunrise, having ridden five and a half

leagues (seventeen and a half miles). Here we took a second cup of coffee and then pushed on again through a rough but picturesque country with an occasional glimpse of the sea. Our poor little pack-horse climbed over the stones like a cat and followed us of his own accord. We crossed a good many rivers and at one of them we stopped for our breakfast. It was a pretty spot, but there was no grass, so our poor horses had to wait for their breakfast. It seemed cruel, but there was no help for it. We stopped at nine and started on again in about an hour and a half; the last of the ride was over a barren country with steep hills, and without shade. It was baking hot and a hard ride. My horse bolted for every one of the shade trees he saw, which were few; and Mr. Beal's horse went down with him rolling over in the dust. He caught his spur in the seat of his trousers, tearing them off, and when he got up I laughed so hard I nearly fell off my horse. I never was more glad to reach a place than I was to get into Trinidad and out of the sun which seemed to bake into us. It was half-past one when I reached Mrs. Turner's house. I found a fresh horse for Mr. Beal, but mounted mine again and started up the valley at four o'clock. My horse came in in very good condition, indeed, having made forty-five miles in the day's ride, after twenty-four the day before. He had nothing but grass and little of that until he reached Trinidad, yet never loafed once all the way or refused to respond to my call. These little horses are certainly wonderful in their endurance. I sent my horses back by road this morning and we are waiting for the boat to-morrow.

Yours affectionately

NED

I have always enjoyed visiting Trinidad; its ancient charm pleased me in 1870 and the town has

never lost its attraction for me. Once, when tramping on foot just outside the town, I came upon the gate of the cemetery and went in out of curiosity. There I found the resting-places of the old people of Trinidad and read the names that I had often heard when I was a child — Lynn, Carret, Yznaga, Cantero, Borel, Baker, and many others. A strange feeling came over me as I thought how short a time ago these people were living in the greatest luxury, owners of the costly houses within sight, and of the beautiful valley below me; and in how short a time everything changed and had been left almost in abandonment; and how I, representing a third generation with boys of my own, was there to build again upon the ruins a similar industry, without the aid of slave labor, but with the assistance of modern improvements.

CHAPTER X

FIRST SIGNS OF INSURRECTION

SOLEDAD by the winter of 1893 was far different from the place it had been ten years before when I first became actively interested in its welfare. The estate had grown considerably and now Soledad and its dependencies comprised some 12,000 acres; nearly 5000 acres in cane and the remainder used chiefly as cattle lands. There were about twenty-two miles of private railway and our factory had a capacity of grinding 120,000 tons of cane. In the crop season some twelve hundred employees lived on the estate. We had approximately 750 head of working cattle for ourselves and our tenants, and perhaps 1000 or 1200 head of stock on the potreros. The nominal book value of the estate was something over \$800,000. Our cane was drawn from lands owned and worked by us; from lands owned or leased by us and sublet to tenants; and from cane contracts with other owners. In the course of time the latter class of land was in most cases acquired by Soledad. We drew a small percentage of cane also from owners who sold freely to us, but were under no contract or obligation to do so. We advanced money to tenants for cultivating the land and making the crops; such advances to be returned by cane delivered, valued at rates based upon the current quotations of sugar at Cienfuegos. Such

contracts were mutually inclusive; they must deliver all their cane to us; we must receive and pay for all such cane.

In contrast with the early days, we were living more comfortably at the vivienda, and were better able to entertain our guests. Mr. and Mrs. Senff, Mr. Havemeyer, and a large party came out to Soledad this winter, and I took charge of two young girls and their governesses while the others went on to Trinidad. Then all of them, twelve in number, spent Sunday at Soledad. I wrote Mrs. Atkins of their entertainment:

SOLEDAD, *March 6, 1893*

DEAR KATE:

... When our visitors came up, I guess they did not expect much with so large a party, and I pretended I thought they had dined. When they entered the house and saw it lighted up by electricity and the table set, they were very much surprised and pleased. I had asked the French governess to decorate the table with the choicest roses she could find, and she did so well that I hardly knew the place myself; it was really very pretty and the dinner was excellent. I was very much pleased because the ladies all seemed so delighted after their not very good accommodations at Trinidad; the two girls, Laura and Elsie Whelan, were already feeling at home with me and helped to entertain. . . . My guests left this morning; they said their trip to Soledad was the pleasantest feature of their stay in Cuba.

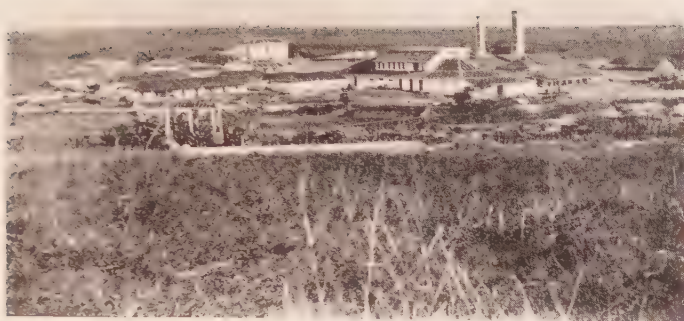
Yours affectionately
NED

Mr. and Mrs. Senff, whom I liked very much,

stayed on and went North with me. We had a good deal of other company, and it was much like living in a hotel. There was quite an American colony now on the Cienfuegos and Trinidad estates, and they liked to meet on Sunday at Soledad where they knew they could find rooms and were sure of a welcome.

We had one terrible accident to mar that pleasant winter. Very early one foggy morning a couple of heavy cane cars, which were standing on the track near the mill, somehow started and after running about a mile crashed into a cane train, killing the fireman and conductor and fatally injuring the engineer, Louis Roque, who was one of our oldest and best men. The locomotive was wrecked and several men injured. Nothing had ever happened on the estate that had pained me so much, and Mr. Murray was completely upset.

The greatest difficulty I had to contend with that winter was Mr. Murray's ill health, which had a depressing effect upon his disposition and spirits; and as our contract expired at the end of the season, I began looking about for some one to succeed him. I was fortunate enough to secure Mr. J. N. S. Williams, a Scotchman, who was then Cuban agent for a large Glasgow firm. He combined many of the requisites for the position, was highly spoken of, and was a man whom I liked in every way. Although he was only thirty-six years old, he had already had ten years' experience in the Sandwich Islands.



SOLEDAD BATEY, 1884



SOLEDAD BATEY IN THE NINETIES



By the winter of 1894 the general unrest throughout the Island was beginning to be felt at Soledad. When I returned from a trip to Trinidad with Estéban Cacicedo in March, the mayoral of potrero brought a letter for me which he said was left by a strange man at his house late at night. It was signed with the name of Manuel García, the famous bandit, and demanded five thousand dollars to be sent by bearer, on penalty of being burnt to the ground or blown up by dynamite. I had no doubt that it was sent by some one on the place, who hoped to scare me into giving him something. The Civil Guards, all of whose officers were very friendly, in their anxiety to catch some one, made such a stir all over the country for miles around that I had little hope of finding out anything. The mayoral himself was probably concerned in the plot. Two or three days later we had more excitement.

SOLEDAD, *April 13, 1894*

MY DEAR KATE:

Last night Captain Beal called me from dinner and telephoned that there was a body of armed men there who had robbed his contractor's house and they were just leaving; he wanted me to notify the Civil Guards, so I connected with the Government wire which passes our house and notified all the stations within ten miles. Pretty soon Beal called again and said the bandits had turned and passed his place and were following the railroad to Soledad, and that their number had increased. I had no idea they would come into our batey, but I called up the private guard and watchmen and gave them all a round of ammunition, and

we buckled on our pistols and waited. Meanwhile I telephoned Mr. Walter Beal at Cienfuegos to try and have a body of cavalry sent out here, but to the rear of us to try and cut them off; two lonely guards came along on foot after a while and I gave them horses and sent them out. They wanted to stay and protect us.

This morning I was up at Caledonia and met a lot of guards hunting for bandits; they thought me imprudent, but I told them I did not know a safer spot to go than to the place the bandits were the night before. They disappeared somewhere and no doubt are miles away by this time.

They got \$350 at Captain Beal's contractor's and took some horses; they made everybody lie down on the floor and held their pistols over them while they robbed the house; Beal very nearly met them as he was out riding. I think they were all strangers here or they would have gone to Beal's house. If the bandits do not return to trouble us, of which there is hardly a chance, I shall leave here on Monday as I planned, so will not have a chance to write again. The place is full of Civil Guards to-night. I don't know what they expect to find here.

Yours affectionately

NED

It was during these minor disturbances that we entertained most distinguished visitors for breakfast. A party of twelve made up of Señor Dupuy de Lome, Spanish Commissioner to the World's Fair, and a very prominent person in Spain, soon to be Spanish Minister at Washington; Concas, who took the Spanish caravels across the ocean to the Chicago World's Fair; Fernandez, Commissioner from Cuba and Puerto Rico to the Fair; with the

President of the Havana Board of Trade, a number of planters, and some notables from Cienfuegos. My acquaintance with Dupuy de Lome, dating from that breakfast party, developed into a warm friendship, and during the insurrection I was indebted to him for many favors and much assistance during his stay at Washington.

Far more worrying than bandits was the pending Wilson Tariff Bill, which proposed, among other things, to take sugar off the free list and abrogate reciprocity treaties. Among other influential men at Washington with whom I was in constant communication was Senator Aldrich to whom I wrote:

SOLEDAD

MY DEAR SENATOR ALDRICH:

I view with some alarm the possibility of the abrogation of the reciprocity treaty with Spain, which I think would be most unfortunate. The benefits of the treaty have fully equalled the expectation of those interested in business between the United States and Cuba. As you are aware, it has very largely increased the exports to this Island, and has turned the demand for sugar machinery, flour, coal, lumber, hardware, etc., from Europe to the United States. It has restricted Spain in the imposition of certain taxes, thereby reducing cost of production of sugars and cost of freights, as well as ensuring greater safety upon the investment of Northern capital. With a few years more of the present treaty the United States will have the entire control of the markets of the Island, a condition which is more to be desired than annexation. Several of the best and largest sugar places here are owned by Americans, their output being over 100,000 tons, say ten per cent of the pro-

duction of the Island. Our market is New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and we do not want to be forced to purchase our supplies from Europe as was the case before the treaty, and would be again in case of its abrogation. . . .

Very truly yours

EDWIN F. ATKINS

But I worked to no avail, for in August the Wilson Tariff Bill became a law without President Cleveland's signature; the reciprocity treaties were abrogated, Cuban raw sugar was taken off the free list, and Spain retaliated by returning to her old discrimination against United States imports into Cuba; the cost of living in Cuba advanced and the price of sugar dropped, credit became impaired, the estates upon finishing their crop in 1895 discharged their hands, and unrest flamed out into insurrection that ended in the Spanish-American War.

CHAPTER XI

THE OUTBREAK

By the provisions of the Wilson Bill not only our reciprocity treaty with Spain, but similar treaties with other sugar-producing countries were cancelled at a time when prices of sugar throughout the world were very low, thus tending further to dislocate the trade and causing, with the increased cost of necessities resulting from the Spanish tariff, a serious economic crisis in Cuban affairs. The grinding season of 1895 was abnormally cold and wet, and with their increased expenses the estates, on finishing their crop, found it difficult to obtain further credit, whereupon thousands of men were discharged to swell the ranks of the unemployed. Such conditions offered the best encouragement to Martí and other Cubans, who had long been working to foment insurrection, and the first indication of trouble came in February, 1895. Spain had already yielded to the long-continued demands for reform and had passed laws reducing taxation and giving Cuba, within certain lines, the right to adjust her own taxes. Had these concessions been granted earlier, they would in all probability have satisfied the autonomists for a time, and the Spanish-American War might have been avoided.

The insurrection did not at first promise to be serious, but on February 24, 1895, martial law was

declared; and early in March it was announced that General Martínez Campos, who had brought the Ten Years' War to an end by the Treaty of Zanjón and had been a successful commander in the Carlist troubles in Spain, had been appointed Captain-General; and that troops were to be sent from Puerto Rico and from Spain.

Our first taste of the trouble was when Colonel Celada of the Civil Guards dined at Soledad, and, calling Mr. Williams aside, told him that the Government had information of a proposed uprising in various parts of the Island, one of the meeting-places being at Los Guaos, near Soledad. That same night our telephone lines were cut and a body of armed men was reported as having been seen at Colonia San Francisco. On February 16th I wrote Mrs. Atkins: 'The Government had information of a political uprising in our vicinity and we have been surrounded by troops for several days with headquarters at Captain Beal's. Nothing happened, however, and the news from Spain will quiet them, so it is not likely we shall hear anything more about it.'

I little thought then of the far-reaching results of what we considered a local disturbance, but which led to the sacrifice of thousands of lives and the destruction of millions of dollars in property; it brought the Island to the verge of financial ruin, and caused the Spanish-American War which lost to Spain, once the greatest of world powers, the last of her colonies. Could I have foreseen the struggle

and the active part I was forced to take in Cuban as well as international affairs, for the defence of our rights and properties, I might well have hesitated. Fortunately, the extent of the disturbances was not obvious at first, and I was called upon to take up only one thing at a time. Such an experience, although it was trying, I can now look back upon with a great deal of satisfaction, both for its outcome as far as my personal interests were concerned, and for the many acquaintances and friendships formed then and during the American occupation of Cuba which followed.

In April, when Campos arrived, Máximo Gómez and Antonio Maceo, both of whom had fought in the previous insurrection, had already landed on the Island. Gómez, a native of Santo Domingo and an officer in the Spanish army, had been disgruntled because he was not promoted and had fought against the Government in the Santo Domingan rebellion; he fought again as an insurgent in the Ten Years' War in Cuba, and at its end was pardoned and exiled by Campos. Now he returned to fight again against Spain. Maceo was a Cuban mulatto, who possessed much influence among the negroes, and both he and Gómez were skilled bush fighters. Campos's first act was to proclaim amnesty to all who would surrender, and he opened negotiations with the leaders, no doubt hoping to buy them off either with money or concessions as he had done at the time of the Treaty of Zanjón. In these efforts he was unsuccessful, for now the insurgents were

backed by the Cuban Junta in New York; and it was thought that Gómez listened to the overtures of Campos only to gain time to recruit his forces and to obtain arms from the United States. At all events, the negotiations were soon terminated, and some fighting took place in the eastern part of the Island. During one of the skirmishes, on May 19th, José Martí, the originator of the rebellion, was killed. Martí was undoubtedly a sincere patriot, an enthusiast whose one idea was to free Cuba from Spanish rule, with little thought as to the ability of the Cubans to govern themselves. He had been working among the Cuban residents of the United States and Mexico, arousing their enthusiasm. He collected considerable money for the proposed uprising, and undoubtedly did much for the cause of Cuban independence.

The Cuban Junta in New York, composed almost entirely of naturalized American citizens of Cuban birth, was the ruling power of the insurrection. This society raised money, sent out numerous expeditions with men and arms, and so worked upon the sympathy of the American public that little heed was given to the proclamations of Cleveland, and later of McKinley warning American citizens against aiding the insurrectos and prohibiting the export of arms and ammunition to Cuba. The Junta maintained speakers, subsidized the press, published false reports of the progress of the insurrection, and created such a feeling against Spain that it is hardly to be wondered that the Spanish

Government charged that the war was both created and carried on by citizens of the United States. There was much foundation for that statement; few arrests were made and there were practically no convictions in spite of the protests of the Spanish Minister at Washington.

The officers of the Junta were Tomas Estrada Palma, president; Gonzalo Quesada, secretary; Benjamin J. Guerra, treasurer, all naturalized American citizens, as for that matter were most of the leaders in Cuba. Palma, who had held the title of President of Cuba in the earlier insurrection, was captured by the Spaniards in 1874 and sent to Spain. After his release he did not return to Cuba, but came to the United States and established a private school for Cuban boys at Central Valley, New York; and there he remained until he came to New York as president of the Cuban Junta. Palma, like Martí, was an honest enthusiast, and when the Republic was established he became the first President of Cuba, and in fulfilling the duties of his office he always had the best interests of Cuba at heart.

A young lawyer, Horatio Rubens, of New York, became the legal adviser of the Junta, and was very successful in defending members of the filibustering expeditions when brought before the United States courts. Expeditions with arms and men were constantly sent from the United States, in spite of the official proclamations of neutrality. Many of them were in charge of Captain John O'Brien, who had

been a New York pilot and was popularly known as 'Dynamite Johnny.' In a book entitled 'A Captain Unafraid,' published by Harper and Brothers in 1912, O'Brien tells of the expeditions he landed, and of one in particular which was sent out directly after President Cleveland's second warning. This expedition was much discussed, for and against, but was finally approved by Palma, the argument being that 'it would impress the Administration at Washington and the whole country with the strength of the revolution and gain public sympathy by showing a fighting spirit.' Cleveland and McKinley got little support in their efforts to fulfil their obligations to Spain; even United States marshals and the Revenue Cutter Service failed in duty, and the courts likewise failed to sustain them. Then there were the jingo politicians who were in sympathy with the insurrection or had some personal end to gain and who were continually offering bills for the recognition of belligerency or of Cuban independence. The result was that the Cuban Junta became practically secure from attack and worked openly in the face of the protests of Spain and orders from Washington.

Before the outbreak of the insurrection, Cuba had been infested with bandits, who levied tribute upon the sugar estates by threats to burn their cane or kidnap their owners. Such threats had often been carried out, and heavy ransoms exacted when a wealthy planter was captured. One of the most notorious of these bandits was Manuel García, who



TOMAS ESTRADA PALMA



operated for several years in the district of Cienfuegos. Very many of the estates paid tribute to García, Soledad being one of the exceptions, as I preferred to incur the expense of maintaining a strong field guard to paying tribute. At the outbreak of the insurrection, Manuel García was commissioned as a commander of the insurgent forces, and it was then claimed that the money he had been collecting had gone into the hands of the Cuban Junta of New York. However this may be, García and others of his class, with a following largely composed of blacks, formed the nucleus of the insurgent forces. At that time the people of the Island, however much they may have been dissatisfied with Spain, were not in sympathy with the movement; and the intelligent classes among the Cubans, with few exceptions, favored autonomy under the Spanish Government.

When I went down to Soledad early in January, 1895, I found everything going on very quietly. Mr. Murray had accepted an offer to look after the interests of the Goytesolo family as attorney; and Mr. Williams had become manager of Soledad with Mr. L. F. Hughes, a young Welshman, as his assistant. The machinery was all in excellent order and working well, the new men had fallen into their positions without any friction, and all the old hands seemed to be contented and doing their best. Wages were very low, but as we paid a little more than some others and the men were better treated, our employees, among whom were specimens from

fifteen different countries, were above the average. The various little improvements introduced since the last crop were all giving satisfaction and I hoped would effect considerable saving, which we needed, as prices were miserably low. But we had the small additional expense of some coal and wood, as we found that our bagasse alone did not furnish sufficient steam for the increased output. We had finished our railway to Santa Rosalia and were building a spur toward Rosario, which estate we finally purchased at the end of the season. I also took over Santiago Murray's third interest in Guabairo and his father's account was transferred to Mr. Hugh Kelly, of New York.

In January I wrote Bowerman, our New York agent, of existing conditions:

SOLEDAD, *January 16, 1895*

MY DEAR SIR:

Everything is very much upset here through custom-house complications, recent rains, strikes owing to low wages, etc. Few buyers or sellers and few ready sugars as yet. Flour \$8 a barrel, petroleum oil 50 cents a gallon, coal \$8 a ton, and other supplies in proportion, with an export tax on sugars. All this is due to the Democratic Congress and the people who sent them to Washington and wished to increase our foreign trade in a new way according to theory of political economists with a professor of same for their leader. We are getting along well here, but have not shipped anything yet, hoping for the removal of the export tax.

Yours truly

E. F. ATKINS

A week after this letter was written, the Spanish Government removed the export and also the industrial tax, but no official notification was received by the Cienfuegos Custom-House. A month elapsed before orders from Madrid arrived, reducing duties to the extent of three and one half cents per one hundred pounds, but nothing was heard of the other reforms.

SOLEDAD, *January 25, 1895*

DEAR KATE:

Some very curious developments are taking place in consequence of the crisis in sugar prices. Up to this year there had been great competition among the places in buying cane. I have steadily refused to vary from our one form of contract and have advised and urged others against paying such high prices, without any effect; and in consequence we have paid a good deal less for our cane than others, and our tenants have been obliged to go slowly and pay their way. The result is that they are out of debt now and in good sound condition, while others have been wasteful and in building up their fields rapidly have run themselves into debt. Now the hard times have come, other manufacturers have reduced prices of cane to such a low point as to ruin their colonos and make it difficult for themselves to get sufficient cane to run their mills, and I have guaranteed our people a minimum price which amounts to fifty per cent more than others are paying and will give them a very fair profit, the arrangement to continue for this crop only. We are getting by this all the cane we need daily, and everybody is working with a determination to assist us in every way; but the other manufacturers are pretty mad, and it is a matter of gossip that we shall lose

\$100,000 on our crop. I believe that we shall make more than they can in all events, as I know just what the cost will be. These matters are constantly on my mind, and all my time and attention is devoted to possible savings and improvements in work and arrangements for the future. We take the leading sugar publications in English, French, German, and Spanish and study them carefully. Mr. Williams devotes his attention to the mechanical improvements, Mr. Scaife to the chemical, and I to the business points.

Yours affectionately

NED

The wet and cold that winter were unprecedented, work was frequently stopped, and when the mill was not running our electric lights were put out. We were all lonesome and homesick. Valentines from Bob and Ted, dear little fellows, seemed like an oasis in the desert. The poor laborers with their thin clothes were suffering from cold and an epidemic very like intestinal influenza was raging.

The men's cooks struck for higher wages, and the Civil Guards had to be summoned to keep an eye on the leader, who got drunk and ugly. To add to our troubles, the son of our next-door neighbor at Belmont came to visit us and fell ill with a light case of yellow fever, through which Mr. Scaife and I nursed him. It did seem ridiculous, just at a time when everything was going wrong about the place, that I should have to nurse Griswold Stowe. There was a big fire in La Torre's cane, and in February one of our cargoes of sugar was lost in a storm; but as the crew was saved and the cargo insured I could

hardly regret it. The one bright spot in the winter was that our faithful old negro cook drew a lottery ticket for \$2500. Contrary to custom, he was not upset by his good fortune, but kept on with his job, and wanted me to keep his money for him.

We had but few personal experiences at the beginning of the insurrection. The last of January the Civil Guards warned Beal and Williams that a certain bandit was out to kidnap me; but this proved to be a pleasure denied or an adventure escaped, for the danger, if any, was ended by the jailing of the bandit. The officers of the Guard wanted to establish a station at Rosario, where I offered them comfortable quarters. On February 24th the Island was declared under military rule. Although at the east end of the Island the insurrection became more serious during the latter part of March, Soledad finished the crop with practically no inconvenience, and we did not realize the difficulties which were to be encountered during the months to come.

CHAPTER XII

1895

WHILE I was away from Soledad during the insurrection, both Mr. Williams and Captain Beal wrote me constantly, and through their letters I was kept in close touch with all the events of importance on the estate. Mr. Williams's letters were models of exquisite penmanship and clear thinking, and if written expression is an indication of ability, certainly his numerous letters from Soledad are evidence of a lucid, orderly, and comprehensive mind. Captain Beal had a very wide acquaintance in Cuba and was fortunate enough all through the insurrection to keep on comparatively friendly terms both with the insurgents and the Spaniards. He had a good opportunity to keep in touch with the news through insurrectos who were constantly drifting into Guabairo, for Guabairo in comparison with Soledad might have been on a highway; in Cienfuegos Captain Beal knew all the influential Spaniards and through Dr. Perna and others was able to follow closely news from the Spanish side. Whatever information could pass through the mails he communicated to me; and I, in turn, passed on anything of importance to Washington.

In the course of time I came to believe that autonomy was the only solution of the trouble, and while in the North, I worked in Washington

toward this end and was able to continue my work for autonomy in Cuba through the channels that Captain Beal kept open to me.

I corresponded frequently with Mr. Charles Francis Adams to whom I was indebted for much assistance and with Richard Olney, the Secretary of State, who was an old friend of my father's. Mr. Olney was a clear-headed, right-thinking man, not easily affected by sentiment, and when he expressed an opinion did so clearly, with little fear of political consequences. Mr. Olney was always willing to listen to what I had to say upon the Cuban situation; and he requested me to make confidential reports to him from time to time. This I did, and one of my reports was embodied almost verbatim in his report to Congress as Secretary of State. However, I do not think I had quite as much influence as Mr. Lodge attributed to me some time later, in a speech on the Cleveland Administration and the Spanish War: 'I have always believed that if that Administration, instead of taking counsel with the Minister of Spain and a great sugar planter in Cuba, had been guided by a sound, brave American spirit before Spain had squandered blood and treasure in the Island, we might indeed have been saved from the war.'

Early in the trouble Enrique Dupuy de Lome had been appointed Spanish Minister at Washington. He had the friendship and support of the most influential Spanish statesman, Canovas de Castillo, Conservative leader and Premier. De Lome was

a most charming man of excellent connections in Spain. I saw him during the summer of 1895 when he was staying at Swampscott; he was much concerned about the filibustering expeditions which were constantly sent out to Cuba, and about the growing sentiment in this country for the independence of the Island.

On June 12th, President Cleveland issued his first proclamation on Cuba, admonishing 'citizens of the United States and all other persons . . . to abstain from taking part in such disturbances in contravention of the neutrality laws of the United States.' Filibustering expeditions continued, and the insurgents were encouraged by their success at the battle of Mal Tiempo, their one victory in an open fight, when they nearly captured Campos and killed General Santocildes.

Many of the Spaniards thought the trouble would not be of long duration, and the following letter from Joaquin Meyer illustrates the feeling among some of the Spanish people:

TRINIDAD, *June*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

A week ago I went to Cienfuegos expecting to have a personal interview with General Martínez Campos, who used to stop at my house during the last war and is a good friend of mine. I am sorry I arrived too late. . . . As far as I can judge, the war on this Island will be of no consequence, and will soon come to an end. The country is against it, and the insurgents have no money. The principal chiefs lately arrived from outside have come to get a certain sum each of them,

which sum I almost think they will get from Martínez as soon as it is worth buying them, say after they get all the insurgents together under their command. The peace will soon be made. In order to keep the thousands of hands working peacefully after the crop is finished, extensive public works are being started immediately for Government account and the money for it is ready. This is a good idea, and with its execution disappears the greatest danger we had to fear for this Island. I see a better time coming for sugar ere long, and cane should be planted as much as possible.

Yours very truly

JOAQUIN MEYER

The Cienfuegos district was comparatively quiet during the spring of 1895 and we finished our crop without serious trouble. There was no disturbance in any district except Santiago de Cuba where the number of insurgents was increasing, and in May ten thousand was believed to be the correct estimate. They were short of ammunition, and Captain Beal took some pleasure in the thought that 'the more numerous their forces, the more ammunition will be required both for guns and stomachs.'

On Soledad Mr. Williams was taking no chances and preparations were being made against attack.

SOLEDAD, *May 26, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

... I am now separating from the people on the batey some five or six men who have been formerly in the army and Civil Guards, these, with Paños, the field guards, telephone man, and the Anglo-Saxons here, will form a force of about eighteen armed men, which

should be sufficient to cope with any ordinary wandering band of insurgents that may come this way. These bately men I am putting in a room by themselves so that they can be called on at any time during the night without causing disturbance, and during the day they are working near the house within easy reach. I have no fear of any molestation; this place is out of the way and the formation of the country makes it impossible for large bodies of men to manœuvre in, and for wandering companies it is a trap, as the way is readily closed. What we have to guard against chiefly is cattle stealing. We had sixteen lifted the other night, but thanks to the Civil Guards, we got them all back next day. As I say, I am not anticipating any trouble in this vicinity, nor yet in the neighborhood of Cienfuegos, but it may happen that the insurgent movement will gain strength, and in this case if the Spanish power is seriously threatened, I should think that there are sufficient American interests centred in and near Cienfuegos to warrant the petitioning of the American Government for a man-of-war to be stationed in Cienfuegos Harbor. The sum total of American interests in this vicinity amounts to several millions of dollars; and it seems to me much more reasonable for the United States to send a ship here, where there are actual tangible American money interests, than to send ships to Nicaragua where the interests of the United States are prospective and shadowy. To wait until the Spanish Government declined to guarantee the safety of foreigners would be too late, and while it is at present the avowed policy of the insurgent leaders not to molest in any way foreigners residing in the country, if they meet with any material success the whole Cuban population will be so drunk with glory that any shreds of discipline they may now have would be swept away and a reign of the gratification of

personal vengeance would set in, the consequences of which cannot be foreseen. I would repeat *if* there appear any indications of this really happening, there are certainly around here American interests sufficient to warrant the American Government sending a sufficient force to protect the same.

Very truly yours

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

In June everything was going well on our estates, surveying, planting, building going on peacefully; and barring accidents, Mr. Williams hoped for a very fine crop the next year. However, there was news of trouble in Santa Clara.

SOLEDAD, *June 24*, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Respecting the trouble in Santa Clara, I hear that there is nothing of any importance; a small band left Ranchuelo to join Gómez in Puerto Principe and they are chasing a party of a dozen or so in the vicinity of Cumanayagua. However, to be on the safe side, I have put on another watchman at night in the batey, one at each end with orders to allow no strangers to enter the batey after nine o'clock at night without satisfactory assurances. I trust you will approve of this, as an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure; the only thing people would come here for would be arms and if we have fair warning in the house we can resist any coup-de-main. But I doubt very much that there is anything to fear, there is not half the excitement around here there was when they were cutting telephone wires in the neighborhood last February.

Very truly yours

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

Mr. Williams left for his vacation in the North early in July, and Mr. Hughes was appointed assistant manager to serve in his place. During the summer months, owing to disturbed conditions, but little work was done upon the sugar estates, and great numbers of men were out of employment. In June laborers had been glad to work at Soledad for fourteen dollars per month Spanish silver and their board, which amounted to only twenty dollars cost per month, United States currency. Later in the season work was not to be had; and many men, particularly negroes, joined the insurgents or took to the woods to live by pillage, as there was still an abundance of cattle. In July fighting was reported from the eastern end of the Island, and the Spanish population was arming everywhere and forming volunteer companies.

From P. M. Beal

GUABAIRO, July, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Máximo Gómez is immensely popular, is a brave man and a good clear-headed soldier. If he could be got rid of, the end would be much nearer. . . . I understand the command of the Villas (Santa Clara Province) has been assigned to Roloff, but he doesn't seem to be here. . . . Small parties are seen in various places, one in this vicinity, but they are all hurrying up country. Yesterday our carpenter met a party of four back of Vacqueria, like most of them armed with revolvers and machetes. Here we have nothing to fear until crop time. . . . By far the great majority of the people are against this rebellion. Everywhere towns and cities

are arming in defence of their homes. Even the small village of Los Guaos has two forts and some thirty volunteer cavalry.

Yours very truly

P. M. BEAL

Late in July, Captain Beal left for a visit to his home in Denmark. The authorities offered a guard of Spanish soldiers for the estate while Mr. Hughes was in charge. We communicated by cable and I declined the offer. At that time we had not been molested and I reasoned that seeking the sympathy and support of the American people, as they did, the insurgents were not likely to attack American property; while a small force of Spanish troops would only invite attack for the purpose of obtaining arms. As it turned out, this refusal was a mistake for which I was reprimanded by the State Department; for later, when we were in danger and the United States Government asked Spain for protection, General Campos replied that troops had been offered to Soledad and declined and he could not be responsible for subsequent damage.

From L. F. Hughes

SOLEDAD, August 14, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

As I reported in my letter of 12th, there has been some fighting beyond Arimao. On Monday (12th) everything was quiet as far as could be discovered. Tuesday a detachment of 200 men and 7 officers came up here from Cienfuegos. Within half an hour of leaving here for Arimao, they came on and were attacked

by a band of insurgents who were, I believe, soon defeated. Reports of some fighting reached us all day, but toward night everything was quiet. To-day a further reënforcement of 250 men and 16 officers, under command of Lieut.-Col. Escribano, Chief of General Staff, reached here from Cienfuegos about mid-day. Colonel Escribano informed me that he had been instructed to leave a detachment of 18 men here to guard the estate. I told him that I did not know whether you wished to have soldiers stationed on this estate, but that until I could have your reply by wire I would give the men he proposed leaving every convenience, and at once sent off cable No. 1. After breakfast, Colonel Escribano told me that as we had no fort on the estate, he was unable to leave any men here until one was built, asking me when we would build one. This I thought required another message as it qualified the other. I gave him a note at his request (though I tried to get out of doing so) to the effect that we have no fort and that I had cabled you for instructions. I enclose copy of letter. The troops then all left here for Los Guaos.

Very truly yours

L. F. HUGHES

Some of the Spanish authorities at Cienfuegos were suspecting us of 'neutrality,' which to their mind probably meant favoring the insurgents. A complaint against the manager of Soledad was entered with our State Department, which passed it on to me. I answered as follows:

Orders sent to Soledad are to respect both civil and military orders of the Spanish authorities and to render every assistance for transportation of troops, to deny all demands for money from insurgents and report same by cable, but at same time not to offer any re-

sistance to latter if they appear.... From deserters from the insurgent ranks and from such parties of insurgents as have visited the place, we learn that strict orders under severe penalty have been issued by their leaders not to injure any foreign property.

It was probably our exemption from injury up to this time, in contrast to depredations upon the estates of Spaniards, that led to the suspicion against us. The insurgents still wished to keep on good terms with Americans, by some of whom their cause was so largely supported. We were still holding out against having the military at Soledad, although Perkins & Welsh had built forts at Constanca and Victoria, and the Ponverts had a few soldiers at Hormiguero.

Mr. Williams returned to Soledad in late September.

From J. N. S. Williams

S.S. NIAGARA, *Sunday, September 22, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

...We have had an exceedingly smooth and pleasant trip. There was nothing in the shape of a Spanish gunboat to be seen until we entered Guantnamo Harbor. The ship's officers say that gunboats outside of the harbor are rarely seen and the people on shore say that the officers on the gunboats complain bitterly when they are required to do any outpost duty; consequently there is no doubt but that expeditions are landed without much interference on the part of the authorities. All was quiet at Guantnamo while we lay there and a representative of the house of Brunet in this town told me that Colonel

Conellas has commenced active operations and has broken up in the last few days several camps of the insurgents. All of the estates in Guantanamo are preparing to grind, and while the owners do not expect very large crops, they do anticipate a full average and completion without very much trouble. As might have been expected, the stories printed in the American press about this district are very much exaggerated, to such an extent that no reliance can be placed upon any such news. At Santiago de Cuba things are not nearly as bad as reported; there is some distress, provisions are very high, and the town is very crowded. The authorities are making several much-needed improvements and thus by employment, some of the destitute are relieved to a certain extent of want.

I spent one evening at the Club and met a great many people, and I got as many opinions of the state of things, differing from each other, as there were men in the room, and it looks to me as though each one expressed the opinions that reflected his own wishes in the matter. Every one, however, united in saying that the campaign is being conducted by the Spanish troops with great moderation and that all reports to the contrary are not true. It is also said that by far the larger proportion of the insurgent forces are negroes; it is therefore plainly to be seen that considering the sources of information open to the correspondents of American papers on the spot, the animus that accuses the Spaniard of murderous brutality is evident. The Spanish authorities give no information to any one.

On arrival at Cienfuegos, I found the town very quiet. I immediately went to the Estate Soledad, and found that there had been no events of importance for some little time. Large numbers of insurgents were reported to be in the vicinity, small bands of whom

have made occasional visits to the estate, doing no damage. On these occasions they had assured the assistant manager that the property would not be molested by them. There are but comparatively few Spanish troops in the vicinity. A detachment of Spanish troops, some 350 men in number, composed of regulars and volunteers, are disposed on a line some six miles in our rear, from Arimao to Cumanayagua, a distance of say twenty miles, and with this exception there are no permanent troops in our neighborhood. . . . The insurgents, under their chief Rego, have destroyed some towns outside of our boundaries. Recent destruction of this kind has been carried on in the rear of our troops, between their line and our boundaries. The workmen on our property are very quiet, and apparently have no fear of attack. I find by enquiry among them that the general belief among this class is that should wages advance, the lines of insurgents would be rapidly depleted, many of the white men being there through inability to obtain work and consequently to support themselves. In accordance with your instructions, we have employed as many workmen as we could conveniently dispose of during the past few months, many of these in work not absolutely necessary, in order to provide them with means of livelihood.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

The first of October Mr. Williams went to Havana to see Ramon Williams, the Consul-General, in regard to a heavy fine, some \$7000, exacted by the Spanish custom-house at Cienfuegos for an error in the manifest of some sugar machinery shipped by our New York agent, Hugh Kelly. Sev-

eral months later, through the efforts of Dupuy de Lome, General Campos, and others, the Minister of Ultramar ordered the fine returned to us. Our State Department had also been in correspondence with Madrid, but without avail; and when I informed the Assistant Secretary of State that the money had been refunded, he asked how I managed it, and said he thought it the first case upon record where an American citizen had recovered a fine once paid at a Spanish custom-house. It was simply evidence that the Spanish Government wished to keep on good terms with us, although Mr. Williams had reported that at Havana 'there was a smothered feeling of irritation amongst all Spaniards against the Americans, and the press teemed with letters against America and all sorts of silly talk was being indulged in.'

Mr. Williams had been convinced that the insurgents would levy tribute on plantations for permission to grind. On September 23d a demand signed by the rebel chief Rego for \$2500, as 'contribution to the Cuban cause,' had been made and ignored. Early in October the demand was raised to \$3000. Of course I gave strict orders to refuse such demands: 'In view of the Proclamation of the President of the United States warning our citizens against giving assistance to the insurgents a compliance with such a request might deprive us of the protection of our own Government as regards our property in Cuba.' However, I wanted to map out some course among the American property-owners

in regard to the course to be pursued and instructions to be issued in such cases, which would work more effectually than if each one pursued an independent course.

In October, matters were becoming more complicated at Soledad. Carlos Roloff, so-called Major-General of the insurgent army, issued an order that there should be no grinding of cane upon the estates under penalty of destruction. Roloff was a Polish Jew by birth, who had become an American citizen, and then had gone out to Cuba as clerk in the house of Bishop & Company at Cabairien, of which Mr. Walter Beal was at one time a partner.

About the end of October, Spain announced that she would send a hundred thousand troops to suppress the insurrection and Gómez had invaded the villas. Matters were now serious, and both the Spaniards and insurgents began to accuse us of favoring their opponents. The Spanish commander Ortega threatened to burn not only Guabairo, but Soledad, claiming we were insurgent sympathizers.

Captain Beal, who had gone home to Denmark, returned the last of October, and lost no time in getting in touch with the situation.

To Mr. Walter G. Beal

GUABAIRO, *November 2, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. BEAL:

I arrived in Cienfuegos on the evening of the 28th. I passed the following day there picking up information. On Soledad there had been a panic, the mayoral and several others had stampeded to Cienfuegos

leaving Mr. Hughes alone. I ran across these old hens one after another and I can tell you they painted the situation a mighty dark blue. Later I was informed there would probably be no boat for Soledad, as the rebels would not permit her to pass unless she paid her port charges; on her way down she had been stopped, the rebels took the Chinaman Damian out of her and kindly informed him that he would immediately be conducted to the nearest guasima where the solemn ceremony of hanging a Chinaman would be proceeded with in due form. However, he made some kind of compromise with them, gave them his nickel-watch and I don't know what else — and he was landed right side up at Cienfuegos never again to return to Soledad while these dreadful people held the situation. In the evening these steamboat people held a meeting and I believe it was decided to pay the rebels the same amount they paid the Government and so I got a passage to Soledad.

I arrived on the colonia the 30th, in time for breakfast and passed a quiet afternoon talking the situation over with Posada. In the evening at eleven o'clock we had a visit from the rebels.

The situation in general is bad. The country in this vicinity is full of rebels; we can go out most any hour in the day and find them within the Guabairo. Cantabria has a force of twenty volunteers on the batey. Yesterday the rebels demanded their surrender and a fight was the consequence. A large body of troops advanced from Los Guaos, at the bottom of our potrero. They opened fire at long range with their mausers. The rebels were then busy burning right and left both in Cantabria and the colonias between Cantabria and our potrero Naranjita. There was a great racket, but I doubt if any one was killed. The Cantabria, however, lost most of their cane. This is the evil

of having an inadequate force on a place; instead of being a safeguard it becomes a constant menace. On my arrival the rebels were anxious to know if I would place a guard of troops in the place. The answer was, No, there would be no forces here by *my* request so long as they respected the property.

Yesterday Inocente fell in with the troops under command of Commandant Ortega. This officer halted him and commenced to question him with severity. One of the guides interposed saying that he knew Inocente, that he was a good man and was employed on the Colonia Guabairo. To this Ortega replied that on Colonia Guabairo and Ingenio Soledad they were all insurrectos, that he would burn them all, and that he would set fire to Colonia Guabairo and Ingenio Soledad with his own hand. I am going to Cienfuegos this afternoon. I will either see Zul in person or get some of my friends to see him. Ortega must retract or this will go further. I see Piñol at the bottom of this. That scoundrel will also be attended to.

Yesterday afternoon the rebels were on the batey. We requested them to leave immediately and they did so. We gave information immediately as usual; at that same moment about eighty rebel cavalry were passing through the Brazo, and Commandant Ortega with some two hundred men, horse and foot. The last couple of days the troops have been very active in this vicinity, and the rebels — a large number armed with revolver and machete, and some with machete only — are no doubt retiring toward the hills.

I wrote Mr. Atkins by last mail stating that I would give him details by this mail, but I cannot. Unexpected things turn up and I have not a moment left. Please let him read this.

With kind regards to you all, I remain

Very truly
P. M. BEAL

Mr. Williams went North and returned with his family the first of November.

YNGO, SOLEDAD, *November 4, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Just a few lines to enclose those written on board the *Santiago* and to let you know that we arrived here 'sin novedad.' I am glad to say that the family like the place and admire the surroundings, and truly the place is looking fairly well considering the cyclone.

In my official letter I touch upon the bad attitude of some of the Spaniards as expressed toward us, and it seems to me that there is sufficient evidence to warrant your laying the matter before the Spanish Minister. If the troops burnt the place up, we could not prove it to the satisfaction of any court, but it certainly looks to me as though the Spanish Government can be notified that, in view of the unconcealed threats that have reached me and also yourself per Piñol, they will be held responsible if the place is burnt. I think you have abundant grounds for this and the evidence I can produce is conclusive, as the men who made the statements are known and can be produced (if the insurgents don't kill them meantime).

One of our monteros was hung the other day; Blas Sarria by Claudio Sarria.¹ Cause, private vengeance. I expect that a lot of private feuds will be settled during these times. There were a lot of men here last night enquiring who had been robbing the store. They were insurgents, but behaved themselves decently. In haste.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

¹ This Claudio Sarria was a negro, born and reared on Soledad, who had joined the insurgents, and was a 'leader.' —

GUABAIRO, *November 20, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

On the night of the 18th, eight negroes appeared on this batey. The one who commanded this small party had an official document in his possession, signed by Rego, ordering him to burn the jurisdiction of Cienfuegos. This document contained no exceptions. This negro said, individually, he would endeavor to do us as little harm as possible, but added that there were many who held similar documents. This is the same party which fired Castellano's cane a few days ago. Mr. Williams will explain to you what the rebel commandant Grande said to him yesterday and you can draw your own conclusions. For my own part I have no confidence in any of them. Grande is a renegade Spaniard, a traitor to his country. At the outbreak of the rebellion he was corporal of the Civil Guards at the Sierra, and while holding this position of trust, surrendered the arms and ammunition entrusted to him and offered his services to the insurgents.

Don't let the reports that we are in sympathy with the rebels give you one moment's anxiety; we are all right! As for Piñol, we have absolutely nothing to do with his removal to another district. Leave him alone; he is gradually strangling himself. Your friends here have no better opinion of him than you have. . . . We are again overrun with rebels from Rego's camp, and it will continue so until he is destroyed.

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

The preliminary troubles were now over and the real troubles at Soledad were soon to commence.

CHAPTER XIII

INCREASING DEPREDACTIONS

MATTERS had become so serious that I determined to send Mr. Walter Beal down to Cuba as my representative. He was well fitted for the work, for he was highly thought of by the Spaniards, and in the Ten Years' War had received the Cross of Isabella for his services to the Spanish Government. He arrived at Cienfuegos the morning of November 25th, the day after fires were set at Soledad. He immediately sent the following communication to Campos at Santa Clara:

MOST EXCELLENT:

Yesterday several colonias of cane of the Central Soledad property of E. Atkins & Company, residents in the United States, were burned. The commander of the zone was duly notified, who sent troops to that place; and as they found no enemies, they left the estate, the fire was put out, operations continued. To-day another colonia is burning, and the batey is threatened, which is of great importance. I asked for help from the commander of the zone, who says he cannot dispose of any force, as they are in operations. I beg of you to help protect interests while the Central organizes at its own expense an armed force to check so many damages.

Campos replied by wire:

As I have understood, you did not want protection for the estate. I notify the commander of the zone to give help with force at his disposal.

From W. G. Beal

CIENFUEGOS, November 27, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

I have been on the jump every minute since my arrival here, as you will see by the following memo: Arrived at Cienfuegos on the 22d inst. at 1 A.M., saw chief of zone, telegraphed General Campos immediately on my arrival. Returned to Cienfuegos on morning of 23d and at 2 P.M. left here for Soledad with twenty-five Civil Guards, the first force to reach the estate. I came in from Soledad last evening bringing in the same force, so you can see there has not been any time wasted. In fact the situation was not for any other action, and although the task has been severe and difficult in the extreme, I am happy over the result obtained, having conquered all obstacles and gained the confidence of the higher officials and the public in general, and it affords me particular pleasure to be able to assure you that the suspicion which has been resting upon the Soledad and the bitter feeling, so manifestly prevalent when I arrived has given way to a very different condition of affairs, and the feeling toward you now is more as you would desire it to be. I have received many congratulations for my success, as there were many who entertained doubts of your receiving any aid from the Government, having declined their offer.

Yours very truly

W. G. BEAL

From J. N. S. Williams

YNGO, SOLEDAD, November 24, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Recent cablegrams will have informed you that things have taken a decided turn for the worse in this

neighborhood. On Thursday (21st), as I started back from town, I could see dense smoke in the direction of Soledad, and a little later meeting the *Soledad* in the harbor I hailed her and asked for news. The reply came that Soledad was on fire from Rosario to San Mateo! I pushed on up the river, keeping a bright lookout for insurgents on the banks. Arriving at Factoria, I could see the extent of the destruction, the cane along the river-bank from the pontoon to the Vega Miguel had been burnt over and the fire was then raging in San Mateo and at the Herredura near Zambumbia. The fire in San Mateo was a very heavy one. Mr. Hughes and the people were there. I picked up a mare near by and rode into the batey, on my way meeting the two Prescotts who were repairing the telephone line to Cienfuegos which was cut when the fire was set. I enquired from them the extent of the damage and was relieved to know that the batey was so far uninjured. On enquiry I found that the fire was started in Rosario, and with a high north wind blowing, the party setting the fire had it all their own way. In three quarters of an hour from the time of the first smoke, 12.30 P.M., the whole place was on fire and by 5 P.M. it was over. Mr. Hughes reports that only a small party of negroes set the fire, and while he was engaged in putting it out in one place, they would be setting it in another not a quarter of a mile away. A large body of rebels watched the work from a neighboring hill. One of the fire guards asked them if they had orders to do this damage. They said they had and threatened to kill the men putting the fire out. However, no notice was taken of these threats, and finally the fire was subdued. On my arrival at the batey, I found communication with town established and immediately telephoned Captain Beal, gave him the news, and asked if he could get a force up to the batey that night,

but it was not possible to do so. The total loss of cane by Soledad and her colonos was between seven and eight million arrobas of cane. That same night we were visited by a party of insurgents who took away two more horses and who said that they were going to burn the buildings on the batey, but they finally went off without committing any outrages. Next morning Captain Beal arrived by steamer and a column of troops came up and stayed an hour or two, had breakfast, and went off again. They were commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Celada of the Civil Guards, who would not leave any men for our protection, having, as he said, no orders to that effect. I sent Mr. Hughes to town to see Mr. W. G. Beal and to endeavor to get back our arms, as we were without any means of defence whatsoever excepting some revolvers and machetes. We received the permission to have the arms, but at that moment Mr. Beal telephoned out that the authorities could not spare any soldiers, there being very few in Cienfuegos, and considering that, on account of the women and children on the batey, it would be unwise to have our few arms, the possession of which might induce a conflict which would probably prove disastrous to us, I told Mr. Hughes not to bring them up until we could get the women into town and arrange matters so that we could be free to move. At this moment things looked pretty black, and I sent word to the families they had better get ready to go into town next morning. We were expecting the insurgents any time, as there was a high wind and an ideal night for a conflagration.

Captain Beal then telephoned down that he had just received notice from insurgent headquarters that orders had been sent to stop all destruction in this estate and neighborhood. I suppose this was the reply to my letter and that of Captain Beal to Rego and we

received the notice about eight o'clock Friday night. This, of course, changed the appearance of things very materially, and I concluded that it was unnecessary to send the women away. I had four sentries out all night and slept in my clothes awaiting the arrival of the insurgents, when I was to explain the receipt of the order and endeavor to keep them from destroying the place; but I am glad to say that no one appeared during the night or all day Saturday. Saturday morning Mr. Beal telephoned up that he had received permission for us to raise an armed force of guards on the estate and that we are to receive a detachment of regulars. These orders were wired from Santa Clara by the Commander-in-Chief. It is understood that we are to build a fort where the authorities will send arms and ammunition for our men, which we may supplement as we desire. I think that you may consider the batey as safe now. I propose to raise a force of about thirty men, which will include our mayorals and those of the engineers who care to join. This force is for the defence of the batey, as the troops may be called off temporarily. At the same time we have to protect our stock in the pastures and keep up communications with town as well as to keep wandering bands of negro robbers off the place. I shall use every precaution in enlisting men in our armed force, as no doubt we have plenty of rebel sympathizers working for us who would be glad enough of an opportunity to carry off the arms and join the insurgents. It is going to be costly. I expect about \$1200 to \$1400 per month, but as the principal value of this estate is in the machinery and rolling stock, all of which will be utterly destroyed if the rebels get in here with fire and dynamite, I trust to receive your approval of what I have decided on as being the best available measures for protecting your interests.

I think that unless matters improve in this region

very considerably, we shall not make much, if any, of a crop; and seeing that the insurgents themselves have struck the first blow at Soledad, it is apparent that the scheme of holding to the middle course in this affair is no longer tenable. For the protection of your large interests and our own lives, it now becomes necessary that we join with that side which stands for law and order. There is neither one nor the other to be found amongst the insurgents, by far the greater portion of whom are negroes — I should say at least eighty per cent. Amongst these negroes are to be found the most degraded wretches in this country, men who do not recognize any leader and who are willing to seize upon any excuse for rapine and pillage; that they have left us alone so far signifies nothing. They have been growing bolder with each raid and it is only a question of time before they would be coming right into our houses and sacking right and left. To-day, Sunday, the Civil Guards arrived, and now that I am sure that we are going to be backed up by the Government, I propose to draw the line and let the insurgents know that they cannot overrun this estate at their free will and pleasure.

A column of one hundred men will arrive to-morrow or next day, and, as soon as the commanding officer decides where to put the defences, the work will be commenced and vigorously pushed. I propose to temporarily fence in the batey [the batey comprised some fifty or sixty acres] to prevent a sudden raid by mounted men and will use what available iron there is on the place for the construction of the fort.

Monday, November 25

Early this morning fire was again set in San Mateo, but as the dew was heavy, it did not amount to anything, another thousand arrobas of cane burnt. Mr.

Hughes immediately went down and put out the fire. . . . I am awaiting the arrival of the chief of the flying column which is coming here to commence the defence works. The owners of the steamer *Soledad* withdrew her from the service of the tienda yesterday, and I shall have to put the *Catalina* into commission, and now that we are having protection we can lay in a stock of provisions.

Very truly yours

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

From W. G. Beal

GUABAIRO, November 28, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

I enclose letter from Mr. Montalvo giving notice of burning of the buildings of your San José Estate. Piñol's colonia was fired again to-day, but I do not know the extent of the damage. It was reported to me to-day that the reason for the fires at Soledad and Hormiguero was because you were endeavoring to influence the Secretary of State Olney against recognition of the Cubans. Of course I cannot vouch for the truth of this report, yet it appears quite plausible, and at the same time it may have been given as a feeler.

Yours very truly

WALTER BEAL

Mr. Walter Beal went North in December and interviewed Mr. Palma at the Junta Headquarters in New York with no satisfactory results. Mr. Palma made his usual statements that, as the Cubans now had a civil government, they should be recognized as belligerents by the United States, and when that time came the property of American citizens would be protected.

From J. N. S. Williams

YNGO, SOLEDAD, *December 1, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Respecting the preparations for the defence of the batey, I am glad to say that the fence around the premises, constructed of posts and portable track on edge, is completed, and we are safe from sudden raids by mounted men. A temporary fort has been constructed of sand bags and the bottoms of the pontoons which were taken out last year, on the top of the water tanks behind the living house, and is now occupied day and night by a small detachment of our guards. The main fort behind the machinery buildings will be ready for occupancy to-morrow and the system of sentinels is complete, so that you can be assured that unless attacked by overwhelming force, the batey is safe from destruction. We have a detachment of twenty-seven men, *Infanteria de la Marina*, armed with mausers, also about twenty-five men of our own guards armed with Remington carbines furnished by the Government, in addition to our own carbines which I have brought in from town, altogether a force of sixty armed men, which should be sufficient to cope with any ordinary band of robbers who may chance to come down this way. . . . Troops are passing and repassing constantly and there are now some seven hundred encamped on the batey and twenty-four officers in the house. This is likely to continue for some time, as I hear that the Government expect to make this point a headquarters for one of the flying columns; an act which, while being a little costly to you, will doubly ensure the safety of this batey, as you may be very sure that as long as there are any troops in this neighborhood there will be no insurgents about.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

From L. F. Hughes

YNGO, SOLEDAD, December 5, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

We were informed by Captain Beal that el Mejicano, the insurgent, who goes into battle naked after the fashion of the Vikings, was going to attack Soledad last night, and we waited for him, but he did not turn up. Every night we have men out watching for Claudio Sarria, who has threatened all sorts of things against us and who will receive no mercy if caught. Since the night when they fired shots into the batey, the miserable wretches have not shown themselves anywhere near the place. . . . Last night a column of seven hundred troops passed through on their way to Arimao, and it looks to me as though active operations had commenced.

Yours very truly

L. F. HUGHES

From J. N. S. Williams

SOLEDAD, December 7, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

I have now to say that Claudio Sarria and his gang are at their depredations again. Last night about 8.30 communication with Factoria was severed, and it was evident that houses or cane were burning in this direction, and also farther up the river. This morning the care-taker came up on foot and reported that the almacén at Factoria and also the sugar wharf had been burned to the ground by a party of insurgents, headed by some man unknown to him. They robbed him (the care-taker) of clothes and food and used the coal oil he had for his lanterns to burn down the storehouse. They would also have burned his house, but that he asked for a day to get his little furniture out and to get his sick child away in the daytime. No doubt the



FORT BUILT ON MOLASSES TANKS



CUTTING CANE UNDER GUARD
Cires — right foreground



dwelling-house (at Factoria) will go next. Then they burned Vilariño's house in the potrero and I hear that they ordered out the residents of Castellanos, Gastelu's, and La Hoz houses so that they could complete the destruction. All this took place while we had on the batey nearly three hundred troops. Yesterday morning Vilariño went into town escorted by our armed force. He went for the purpose of securing the rest of the arms the Government have promised us to completely arm our force. While in Caunao word was received by them that a band of negroes were lying in wait for the return of our force at the Laguanillas ford. The colonel in command sent out three companies of infantry to meet our men and endeavor to trap the bandits; but while the junction of the forces was made all right, the bandits got clear away, about seventeen of them. The troops are too slow in getting about, it seems to me. . . . The main fort is just finished. It is built of stone, which was furnished from the stone wall surrounding the field on the other side of the represa, which was ordered to be pulled down by the military commander, as it afforded cover to an enemy too close to the buildings. It is a very substantial structure and after the conclusion of the present trouble can be put to good use for the estate. . . . I have kept my family here, as I consider that they are safer on this place than in Cienfuegos. So far they have not been discommoded. Of course they are nervous, as we all are, not knowing from day to day what is going to happen, but they will stay on this estate as long as I do, and I expect to be the last to leave it. I have telephone communication with Captain Beal every day and hear that small and large bands of insurgents pass through Guabairo to and fro constantly, but so far they have done no damage.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

SOLEDAD, *December 12, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

By my recent cables you will see that the destruction around here has not diminished at all, and I regret to have to report the burning of four or five caballerias of cane at Guabairo with one or two of the workmen's houses; further destruction in Piñol's fields; the complete burning of Santa Rosalia and the further burning of two caballerias of cane in San Mateo. In addition to this scarcely a day passes but we see signs of extensive conflagrations beyond Cienfuegos and toward Lajas and Cruces, and it would seem that the destruction of property in this district is general. . . . Claudio Sarria and el Mejicano are said to have united and their forces amount to some one hundred and fifty men, rendering it somewhat hazardous for our small force to go around the fields very much. These facts I have placed before the chief of the zone, and it is possible that he may augment the detachment placed here, and in that case our field guards will go out with infantry within supporting distance. We are now virtually in a state of siege, as the *Catalina* has been threatened, and I do not give orders for her to leave until just before she starts from Cienfuegos, as the place is full of spies, and if I arranged beforehand the boat would be ambuscaded. Last night some of the bandits were known to be in Anicito's house, and I am afraid that very soon we shall have to pull that house down and get Anicito inside the batey. I have got rid of all the sitio negroes out of the batey, with the exception of those three old fellows and one woman to look after them. Some of them returned to the sitio and others went to town. Those who went to the sitio I give small rations to every Saturday, as I have no work for them and I cannot let them starve. They get the heads of the animals we kill and scraps from the fonda, as well as a ration of rice and a little sugar. The barracon where the negroes

lived I am whitewashing and the rooms I will give to those families that still live on the bately. The barracon was built of masonry and is quite a safe place for the women to live in. In case of firing or an assault upon the place, this offers a kind of refuge for non-combatants. Captain Beal has sent his arms and ammunition here which augments our force by three good rifles. He has also sent his saddle, and if he had sent his horse he would not have lost it night before last. The Captain is feeling very blue and morose over the prospects, as el Mejicano, when he was burning up the Captain's fields, used threatening language, I have been told. The reinforcements have not arrived here yet, but are expected daily. Meanwhile we rub along as best we can.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

SOLEDAD, *December 13, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

It is positively sickening to read in the American papers the reports of speeches made in Congress by interested politicians, in which they treat upon the cruelties perpetrated by the Spaniards upon the luckless Cubans, and to know that such stories are lies fabricated out of whole cloth. In point of fact the barbarities practised by these much belauded Cuban patriots are such as would put Geronimo the Apache to shame. Only the other day a poor carritero was seized by a gang of bandits not far from here, was frightfully mutilated in an indescribable fashion, stabbed all over with a machete point, and hung, on suspicion of being a spy! These things are kept very quiet by the Cuban wire-pullers who are working the great American public, but we know them well enough.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

SOLEDAD, *December 23, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

I now regret to inform you that the insurgents to the number of forty men headed by 'Ta-Ta-Monte,' a negro bandit, and young Torres, a boy who used to work in the machinery department on this estate, have, according to advices from Captain Beal just received, set fire to the Guabairo cane on all sides. . . . I cannot understand this determined destruction of American property. If, as the Cubans claim, they are gaining ground steadily, what can it benefit them to destroy the only means of livelihood they are likely to have in this section; if, on the other hand, they are really losing ground and Gómez' advance into the heart of the Spanish forces is nothing more than the dying kick of the insurgent forces, one would think these people would be anxious to make friends rather than implacable enemies. But the ordinary rules of reasoning cannot apply to the devils incarnate who are running the revolution.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

*From P. M. Beal*GUABAIRO, *December 27, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

The situation for the last few days has been terrible. It has been a perfect roaring hell of fires all the way to the hills of Trinidad and the sea, and one could see nothing but smoke and smouldering ruins, groups of poor people on foot, the women with their little ones in their arms fleeing for safety, homes burned and clothing stolen by their own countrymen who pretend to be patriots fighting for liberty, rather demons fighting for hell! The Mexican when he was here said, 'They call me a demon, but I am the devil and



TRINIDAD MOUNTAINS FROM SOLEDAD



all my people are little devils, and compassion I don't know.'

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

GUABAIRO, *December 27, 1895*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Claudio Sarria was so scared in a recent fight at Abreu's that he tumbled off his horse hid in the bushes, lost horse and arms and arrived at Guabairo grey with fright to tell the tale. . . . It was Claudio's first fight and I expect it will be his last unless he wants to rehabilitate his shattered reputation by an assault upon Soledad. . . . To get rid of Claudio Sarria is a matter of difficulty. If you set a price on his head at present, as he is a captain in the insurgent forces, it would appear as if you were actively opposing the insurgent movement, which I admit you cannot afford to do. If we could catch him at his work on this estate and kill him then and there, we are perfectly within our rights as American citizens defending our property against the depredations of wandering bands of presumable robbers. We have tried on two occasions to catch this band during the night, but so far have met with no success, but I hope to be able some day to let you know that this bad character has been buried. I am cutting down all expenses possible consistently with getting the work we have started on finished in the machinery house. I believe that you will agree with me that it is highly desirable to be in a position to start on the crop say by February 1st, as if you were not ready to grind and the colonos were prepared to deliver cane, I believe under the present contracts this estate would be liable to the colonos in damages.

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

From J. N. S. Williams

SOLEDAD, December 31, 1895

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Sarria and Mejicano will never be caught by the troops, they cannot move quick enough or shoot straight enough, and these bandits are like crows — they seem to be able to smell powder a mile off and take very good care that they don't come too near any dangerous point. Regarding Anicito and his family, I have made up my mind that the next time Claudio comes around that house to pull it down and send the negro and his family off the place. They are spies, I am pretty sure, and it is only consideration for your personal wishes respecting the old man that he has been kept on. It was through his daughter that Blas Sarria, our best cattleman, was hung by Claudio; and the relations of this family with Claudio are so well known that the old man's life would not be safe should an attack be made upon this batey. . . . I think our night patrols do good. None of these bandits want to meet a force of thirty-five men on foot well armed, and when they know that we are in the habit of making these excursions they will be more careful how they pass through our lands. These patrols leave the batey irregularly and no orders are given for such work until just before setting out, so there is no danger of the rebels ambuscading us. Furthermore, a sufficient force is always left on the batey; in fact I usually choose a night when a column is staying on the place for the night. . . . The conditions under which we are living cannot be very much worse unless the insurgents succeed and confiscate your estate! And it would certainly seem as though the end cannot be far off.

Very truly yours

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

CHAPTER XIV

ARRIVAL OF WEYLER

BETWEEN April, 1895, and January, 1896, Spain had sent to Cuba some eighty thousand men, the greatest force transported overseas up to that time. It was an extraordinary feat considering the financial condition of the country. Both the Spanish Premier, Canovas del Castillo, and Martinez Campos were fully aware of the gravity of the situation; but Campos's attempts at settlement had been a flat failure, and he had met with no decisive success in the field. The resident Spaniards and the Volunteers, especially, were dissatisfied with any conciliatory policy and they demanded the appointment of Weyler as commander-in-chief of the army. On January 17th Campos was recalled, and Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau, Marquis of Teneriffe, appointed in his place. Weyler, a small man of light complexion, was of German extraction and an able soldier. He had fought in the Philippines as well as in Cuba; and in the Ten Years' War he had gained the reputation of being an energetic officer who gave no quarter. The Cubans were ready to tell many stories of his cruelty; the Spanish Volunteers welcomed his appointment; foreigners were uncertain as to his probable policy.

On January 1, 1896, I wrote Secretary Olney that we were informed through a confidential but reliable source that it was the intention of the Cuban

agents in New York to destroy the buildings and machinery at our Soledad Estate. A copy of my letter was sent by the State Department to Dupuy de Lome, with the suggestion that action be taken at once. On January 23d, Dupuy de Lome, well aware of the temper of Congress and wishing to forestall a demand from Washington, cabled Campos requesting that troops be sent to Soledad. The Havana authorities replied that fifty additional troops would be sent at once and that they would furnish ammunition for our private guards. At that time we had on the estate a detachment of twenty-five soldiers under command of a lieutenant, and our own force of forty men, nominally under command of this officer, but in reality an independent force patrolling the estate.

Although we had received some ammunition, the promised additional troops had not arrived at Soledad and fires continued to be set in our cane fields. On January 4th came the threatened attack on our batey. Mr. Williams had staked out the ranges about the batey in case of such an attempt and had erected white posts at carefully prepared distances. I had sent him a lot of Winchester rifles with instructions to distribute them among our foreign employees to be used only if their lives or our property were in peril. We had on the estate, besides the troops and our private guards, several expert riflemen; Mr. Williams himself had commanded a rifle team in Canada. These riflemen placed themselves on the tops of buildings while the Spanish guards

were held under cover of the forts, which had been erected around the buildings.

Mr. Williams wrote of the 'battle' as follows:

SOLEDAD, *January 4, 1896*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

All the morning reports kept coming in that a large band of insurgents was near, and I established pickets on the hill towards Cienfuegos. Our boyero had been seized and tied up by Claudio Sarria and sent in to el Mejicano, who was commanding the detachment of rebels, numbering as we afterwards discovered between two and three hundred men all mounted. About one o'clock P.M. Cires, the mayoral of the batey, who was out scouting, came in, followed to the top of the hill by el Mejicano's vanguard of sixteen men, who immediately opened fire at some six hundred yards range. The bullets flew over the batey at one hundred and fifty feet up in the air and buried themselves in the opposite hill. Our men were all on the alert and the gates were closed instantly. The soldiers in the fort replied to the fire, which almost immediately slackened, and in ten minutes the vanguard disappeared to reappear on the railroad line leading to Guabairo. They remained at about eleven hundred yards distance, firing shots that flew high, yelling 'Cuba Libre' and dodging in and out behind the little stony hill, and generally acting like lunatics. No notice was taken of this demonstration and at half-past one they disappeared toward San Mateo, cutting our fences in every direction and cutting down telephone posts, taking away large sections of wire and smashing the insulators. About two o'clock a small column of troops and Civil Guards appeared from Caonao and doubtless the advent of these men saved us from an attack in force. I immediately set about restoring

communication with Cienfuegos, and took advantage of the column to send off my mail to town. It is now evident to my mind that the Soledad guerrillas, and their activity on this estate has caused the uniting of these small parties into one large party of rebels. Claudio Sarria, Rafael Monte, Torres, and Najarro have united their forces with el Mejicano for their own safety. They cannot move so fast as formerly, neither can they remain undiscovered in our vicinity. At the same time it renders our position somewhat more hazardous than before. They did not burn any more cane, and beyond firing twenty or so shots and scaring the poor women on the batey they did nothing except as regards fences and telephone.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

Mr. Williams's letter does not tell the whole story. When the insurgents came over the ridge in the rear of the batey, their leader paused a moment beside the most distant range post to urge his men to attack. That instant he was dropped from his horse by our sharpshooters, some of the others were wounded, and all fled without further attempt to attack the batey. One of the leaders said later that if his followers could shoot like our Soledad guards, they would not be afraid to meet the entire Spanish army. This was the only real fight that we had during the Insurrection.

From P. M. Beal

COLONIA GUABAIRO, January 5, 1896

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Yesterday morning at three o'clock the Mexican,

Najarro and Castellano with, they say, three hundred men, but I doubt if there were as many, placed themselves in ambush in various places to within a short distance of the Soledad Batey: at 1 P.M. the Soledad pickets were driven in. I tried to send a man over in the morning, but failed. However, I knew the batey was in no danger from that visit. It was the guerrillas they were after.

. . . Arms and ammunition are plenty, but clothing scarce, and one can't go far away from the batey without risk of being stripped. So far they have not troubled me personally, but I don't know what moment I may be invited to step out of my pants. . . .

I was informed last night that Quentin Bandera was this side of the Arimao River a couple of days ago looking the ground over. This is the man to be feared, for he has fighting material and knows how to use it.

If the Spanish army can't finish Gomez and Maceo, then I see no hopes, and a prolongation of the struggle would simply mean ruin and the loss of the Island in the end, and perhaps with serious complications for the United States because of that resuscitated octopus, the Monroe Doctrine.

Now just study the situation in its live light. This old fellow (Gómez), seventy-three years old, comes down here with his undisciplined rabble, repeatedly breaks through the strategic lines of educated Spanish generals with all their resources of railroads, steamboats, and many depots of supplies, and its large army of disciplined soldiers armed with the most approved arms of the day. This man overruns three or four districts carrying with him, and successfully protecting, all his war supplies, burying his dead — few of them ever fall into the hands of the enemy — and successfully caring for his many wounded. Considering

all this, one will naturally come to the conclusion that the Spanish army isn't worth —— room.

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

To Mr. Williams

BOSTON, January 27, 1896

MY DEAR MR. WILLIAMS:

I find that Cuban agents have reported to the authorities here, in an exaggerated form, your action with our private guard. I merely mention this for your guidance. We cannot assume the offensive without causing serious complications, but you will understand that you are perfectly justified in driving off any bands that are attempting destruction of our property or are making an attack, as was done upon the batey and railroad train. The matter is a very delicate one, and you will have to draw the line for yourself, as I do not wish to hamper you with too definite instructions not being able to foresee everything which may occur. I will only caution you not on any account to take such action as would in any way compromise our position with our own Government who, up to the present time, sustain us in all respects.

Yours truly

E. F. ATKINS

The small band of insurgents in our neighborhood soon found out that orders had been received restricting the action of the guard and numerous small raids were made upon the estate. There was an amusing sequel to one of these raids made by Ta-Ta-Monte, who looked more like a gorilla than a human being. We had taken on, at the request of my friend Hunike, the Dutch Consul, a Dutch-

man who had been discharged from a Dutch brig at Cienfuegos and was in need of work. As he had some knowledge of surveying, he was sometimes sent out, with others, to make surveys in the cane fields. On their way back one morning, they were attacked by Ta-Ta-Monte's band, the Dutchman was captured, relieved of a small amount of money, his hat and shoes, and also his horse, which necessitated his walking several miles back to the batey.

It took him some time to understand what had happened, and during that time his anger increased. Shortly afterwards the negro band made another raid, when my Dutchman, who had somehow obtained an old cavalry pistol belonging to me, seized a horse and rode out with our guards in pursuit. He was no horseman, and his horse soon got beyond control and rushed him in the midst of the enemy. One negro became entangled in a wire fence; and our Hans, probably more frightened than the rebel, drew his pistol and blew the top of the man's head off. When the adventure was reported to me on my arrival in March, I told him he had done very wrong and that under no circumstances were any of our foreign employees to carry arms unless it was for the protection of their lives. 'Oh, do not say that, Mr. Atkins,' he replied, 'for I enjoyed that most better than nothing.' He did not, however, have another such opportunity, for Ta-Ta-Monte was hanged soon after the adventure and Claudio Sarria was sent to the westward, and so, for a time, we were free from both these pests.

From P. M. Beal

GUABAIRO, *January 17, 1896*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

All the rebel forces from the eastern departments seem to be en route for here. Yesterday this batey had a visit from the Orientals, some one hundred and fifty cavalry and infantry belonging to Quentin Bandera's command, and I must say that I cannot speak in too high terms of their exceptional behavior and good discipline. They were here under trying circumstances, hungry, barefooted and half naked, yet not one of them appropriated the smallest thing to himself without permission, nor did I hear one indecent word, and not one of them entered a building. They are begging their officers to lead them to the attack of some town, so that they may clothe themselves. With exception of the officers, they were all colored. About twenty of the Mexican's people were here to-day after sweet potatoes, but they behaved very well indeed. I have not seen Antonio Abreu for some time.

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

GUABAIRO, *January 21, 1896*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Yesterday was Sunday and I had my usual Sunday experience with the exception that it was worse than at any previous time. On Saturday night the Mexican lay in ambush near the Soledad batey with a force of some fifty men, at about 8.30 Sunday morning he fired the cane in San Francisco with a view to draw the Soledad guerrillas out, but in this he failed. About midday he arrived in the Guabairo batey fighting, crazy drunk, ordered four oxen to be killed and breakfast made for all the force. He was so drunk that he had forgotten that they had already breakfasted.

He informed me that he had information that I had offered ten thousand dollars for his head and that he had come there on purpose to take my life. Of course that was not very pleasant news! Once he hauled out his machete and handed it to one of his men, as if he were afraid to trust himself with it. However, after being there two hours, drinking aguadiente at short intervals, he got so completely drunk that he forgot what he came for, asked me for three centenes and left. Shortly after his arrival, he drew his men up in line on the batey and ordered them to draw their machetes, six were sent off with orders to burn right and left. I remarked, 'You are not going to burn here?' He said: 'No, not here, but in San Francisco.' And his men rode after the six and told them San Francisco. The orgies which followed are beyond description, and of course I suffered very much while the drunken rabble remained. Not a stick of cane is left in San Francisco and much of Aragonés Colonia was also burned. The Mexican said the Americans were their enemies and they would have to kill them.

Yesterday morning a neatly dressed man dismounted in front of my house. He shook hands with me and asked how matters were going here and I told him very bad. He said he knew it and asked me if I did not think it would be convenient for me to go away; I told him I could not think of doing such a thing. He said: 'I am your friend, a true friend, who has come to warn you because we know you are an innocent man! There is a conspiracy to deprive you of your life. . . .' He held out his hand, saying, 'I have fulfilled my mission; the rest remains with yourself. Get away soon, to-morrow, to-day, this hour if possible. Good-bye.'

I could see that his horse had been ridden a long distance and ridden hard. I also noticed that he was in a great hurry to get away, from which I judge that his

horse had come from some rebel camp during the night, that he himself was an insurgent in disguise and afraid to be discovered. But where did he dress himself in that spotless clean suit! . . . Posada and myself, I believe, are the only ones remaining at our post in this zone, excepting places having armed guards. All, I believe, are now deserted, including potreros. . . . I have ordered all the boards taken off the buildings excepting the dwelling-house, and the negro Inocente will be in charge of the place after a couple of days. The mayoral has also been threatened and will have to go away. It is going from bad to worse. Campos has left and there will be terrible bloodshed here or I am much mistaken. I am so dazed and tired that I am writing these pages with difficulty.

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

Before February, the insurgent forces, under Máximo Gómez and the mulatto Antonio Maceo, had swept through the Island from east to west. Maceo's men were negroes armed with machetes and such few rifles as they could obtain; and in order to use the latter more effectively, they often cut the rifles off to make them shorter. None of the Cuban forces were regularly provisioned, and lived off the country. They were expert horsemen, well mounted on horses taken on their line of march; and they were accustomed to living in the woods and fields where they knew every path and hiding-place. The Spanish army had no cavalry, and it was easy for the insurgents to evade them. Very little fighting took place, the Cubans giving their attention to destroying property, killing


cattle, stealing supplies of every kind for their need. Gómez' plan was to make the country uninhabitable; and in order to cut off revenue from the government and add to the unemployed who were likely to join the insurgents, he was sending out proclamations broadcast that sugar estates should cease grinding on penalty of destruction. This threat was thoroughly executed wherever estates were unprotected.

The only estate working in the Cienfuegos district was the Constancia, leased by the Constancia Company of which Mr. Osgood Welsh was the President. Constancia was owned by the Marquis de Apestequia who, although a native Cuban, had been elected a Senator in the Cortes and had become a Spanish grandee. He was the leader of the Conservatives in Cuba, and through his influence seventeen hundred troops were on the estate and grinding going on 'by main force,' as Captain Beal expressed it. All other estates were idle, owing to the insurgent threats, and consequently there was great distress among the country people. Most of the male population had joined either the insurgents or the Spanish guerrilla forces as the only alternative to starvation.

When Campos, with whom we had established very friendly relations through Dupuy de Lome, was recalled, I sent Mr. Walter Beal to Havana, February 4th, to look over the situation and keep me advised. There was much anxiety lest, under the new Captain-General, troops would be with-

drawn altogether from the estates; and with a view to forestalling this action I obtained a letter from de Lome commending Mr. Beal to the Marquis de Ahumada, one of the Spanish generals at Havana. I wished to arrange this matter of troops for Soledad at Havana, if possible, rather than take it to Washington.

Mr. Walter Beal was able to do very little at Havana beyond presenting his letter to the Marquis de Ahumada, who promised to do everything in his power toward the protection of our property and to speak to Weyler in our behalf. He also gave Mr. Beal a letter of introduction for Mr. Williams to use with General Pando. Mr. Williams immediately visited Pando, who gave him no encouragement that we should receive any troops, as they were needed in the field. Our only hope of getting men was through General Celada, of the Civil Guards, who had been placed in command of the Cienfuegos district. We came to know Celada very well. He was a Filipino, and an efficient officer, though he had come up from the ranks. He was not a polished man as were many of the Spanish officers, and I well remember once when he was breakfasting with us he refused a dish of liver with the excuse that his wife suffered from liver trouble. Celada was willing to do what he could to help us and we hoped that we might receive twenty-five Civil Guards. The presence of Civil Guards on the bately would insure our grinding.





GENERAL WEYLER



Captain Beal, however, did not want a guard for Guabairo.

COLONIA GUABAIRO, *February 4, 1896*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

The Guabairo is peculiarly situated and dangerous to attempt to guard by force. It is a rebel highway and it is necessary to them, and they would sacrifice many lives to prevent forts and armed guards being placed there. . . . For my own safety nothing will be necessary. I will be on the place again as soon as my presence is required. I have a strong belief the source of danger has been removed.¹ Everything is going smoothly; there is nothing to do except to keep the run of the oxen and keep cattle out of the cane. . . . Anastacio is one of our Guabairo people and has proven himself a staunch friend to the place. I have every confidence in him.

Everybody awaits General Weyler's arrival with anxiety. They think if Weyler arrives with reënforcements and takes charge of operations before Maceo and Gómez escape from their present compromising position, some good may come of it. For my own part I am of the opinion that Weyler is the man. The humane policy has been tried and failed. Let us try some one who can inspire these people with the fear of God and the Devil at the same time. Weyler's coming is already felt. Those implicated are either making for the woods or leaving the Island, and they are losing no time about it either.

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

In February we received two documents from

¹ The Mexican had been killed at Guabairo by the troops January 22d, and it was said that Claudio Sarria, Ta-Ta-Monte, and another rebel had been sent to Sigüanea to stand trial.

the insurgent 'government' demanding the payment of twenty thousand dollars as an annual tax on our estate. Needless to say I made no response to these documents. I merely notified de Lome and Olney, and we went on with our preparations for grinding. This, of course, was sure to be attended with considerable risk to my employees unless I could guard them adequately, and with danger to myself — if I were caught. One Spanish planter, who persisted in grinding, was hanged.

From P. M. Beal

CIENFUEGOS, *February 22, 1896*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

It seems Claudio Sarria is again at liberty. They won't hang him, he is too valuable a sneak, just what they want to smuggle arms and ammunition. He has all the negroes bearing the name of Sarria at his service. Early this morning it was reported to me that last night Claudio and Ta-Ta-Monte had burnt all the buildings in San Estéban. This was no surprise to me. I have been expecting it sometime. I think we are now passing the most critical time since the beginning.

February 26

I am making plans for visiting the Guabairo. This will now have to be accomplished by way of Soledad. The road is not safe any more: small rebel bands are becoming more and more lawless. When such imps as Claudio & Company can hang people up to the branches by the roadside at their will and pleasure, then it is time to get an anchor out ahead. . . . Three flying squadrons of guerrillas are forming here. I

understand after the troops clear our zone of the larger bodies of rebel forces, these guerillas will operate against the smaller roving bands.

Yours very truly

P. M. BEAL

We found by the end of February that we had a sufficiently strong guard to justify our making an attempt to grind. On the 24th of February Mr. Williams cabled for the sugar men. I had been holding these men, on salary, ready to be summoned. It seemed wise to send them down to Soledad, as the extra expense was very small; and if there was any chance of making the crop, we were bound by contract to our colonos to grind any cane that they could cut. The men sailed February 27th.

From J. N. S. Williams

SOLEDAD, March 6, 1896

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

I am glad to note that the sugar boilers will be here by the steamer to-morrow and we hope to start up some day next week. The worst that can happen to us will be the burning of some more cane which we can grind up as fast as they can burn. The insurgents cannot by direct attack now enter the batey, as we have plenty of men and ammunition, and are as well equipped as any estate in Cuba. As soon as I can see that we are going to pull through, I will wire you so that if you can see your way to coming down you can arrange matters. I should be very glad to see you here, as there are several matters to clear up, but I am afraid if you do come you will not have a very good time.

Yesterday we had an encounter that took on the proportions of a small battle. Our sentinels were fired upon by a small party of men who sneaked up behind Piñol's burning cane. The mounted guerrillas started out at once and pushed the small party back through Piñol's lands. Our men were joined by the Cienfuegos guerrillas under Yzquierdo, and by Piñol's men. The small party fell back and joined the main body in Vilches potrero and an engagement ensued which lasted an hour. Two companies of infantry from Los Gaos sallied out on hearing the firing and attacked furiously, and the rebels, to the number of six hundred men under Rego and Castillo, departed in disorder leaving six dead and carrying off a large number of wounded. About a thousand shots were fired by our men alone. No casualties to report from our men. Just as our men returned full of enthusiasm, a column of troops, five hundred strong, conveying munitions for Arimao, made its appearance on the batey and we are now in the midst of a large Spanish force operating all around us. The Spanish Government are, or seem to be, determined that we shall grind, and no doubt it is a matter of some importance for them. They intend scouring the river Caunao from the mouth to the pontoon with a small gunboat and two or three columns are on their way here to operate. We hear that Gómez and Maceo have been heavily defeated near Matanzas and that they have been driven back into the Havana Province. There have been several severe fights around Sagua and Santo Domingo, and it seems to me that the Spanish troops are striking hard in all directions. The rebels are losing men rapidly, and we may anticipate decisive news before long.

Yours very truly

J. N. S. WILLIAMS

From P. M. Beal

CIENFUEGOS, *March 10, 1896*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

A few days ago I received a note from the civil authorities of the so-called Republic, informing me that my batey had been valued at ten thousand dollars, on which I was required to pay two per cent to the Hacienda of the Republic before the 15th as an annual contribution dating from January 1st, and on Friday, 6th, a messenger came in with a note informing me that two insurgents had just been in the batey stating that they had orders from Rego to burn the dwelling-house, and they persisted in carrying it out. Finally, after much talk they went away stating that they would return on the 8th. The inconsistency of this made me mad clear through and I determined to go up and face the Lion in his den and demand an explanation, let the consequences be what they may. I went immediately to see Blanco and he said he would stand between me and the Government.

In the morning I started for Soledad, went over the colonia, slept there overnight, and early in the morning started out on a beeline across country for the Cuchilla de Maja. When I reached the crossing of the river, an insurgent — one of the exploradores — came out of the bushes and greeted me. He had known me in former years. This fellow went with me to a certain place and there told me to await his return. After some fifteen minutes he returned stating that I could proceed with confidence, that further on I would fall in with others who would direct me in safety. When abreast of Cumanayagua I was warned not to proceed farther on that path, that a short distance ahead the guerrillas from that town were in ambush. On entering the Cuchilla de Maja I learned Rego was in the camp at Mercón — near by — and after riding some twenty

minutes farther I was stopped. Here every hilltop was covered by sentinels and I knew I was near the camp. The nearest sentinel being informed of my errand communicated same to the captain of the guard and he gave orders that I retire to a house indicated on a hilltop and there await Rego's answer. After about three quarters of an hour four horsemen alighted at the hut; one of them was a tall young man of some thirty-four years and of fine appearance. I stepped up to him with the remark, 'I know this is Rego,' judging by the disabled arm. He received me very kindly and invited me into the hut, where we sat down. I commenced by stating that I had come to him to ask an explanation; that I had suffered a great deal from the insurgents and had encountered many inconsistencies and much deception; that one day the delegates of the Hacienda demand that I pay taxes on my buildings and the next day the military come with orders from Colonel Rego himself to burn these buildings. This they declared before many witnesses. Now, this is an inconstancy which I can't understand. Rego promptly answered, 'I know it! I know you have suffered, it was José Romero, the Isleño, who threatened to burn your house and he had no authority for it!' He also gave me to understand that he knew who had been burning our cane lately, and remarked that they had a great deal of ignorance to contend with. Orders had been issued a long time ago to stop burning. Unfortunately, the Hacendados had held meetings in public and had come to an accord to grind by force, and Pando had promised them support. All this was known at headquarters, and then orders came to burn all and I had unfortunately suffered with the rest.

While he did not say so in so many words, I thought I detected an unmistakable intimation that the burning in Guabairo was contrary to his orders. It appeared

as if he wanted to say something, but felt embarrassed by those present. . . . I then remarked, 'Now, Rego, I want to be frank with you and I want you to be the same with me. I have come here for information. Tell me, are insurgent officials authorized to enter into negotiations for grinding by paying for it?' To this he answered: 'I know such arrangements have been made through the civil authorities, but all such arrangements are unlawful, we — the military — have strict orders to destroy every place making preparations for grinding, and a death penalty attaches to every one who obstinately persists in grinding; thus Apestiguia would be promptly hanged if we could get hold of him. We ignore any arrangements made with insurgent parties for any such object.' I then said, 'You understand the situation. Now I want you to advise me in my own individual case.' To this he answered, 'You have very little cane left; let it stand over until next year. If you attempt to cut it, you will lose it and run a very great risk. I will give you an order which all insurgents, civil as well as military, must respect, and you need not have any fear. I will also give you a document which will secure your own personal safety, and by and by, if the United States Government grants us belligerent rights, then all American citizens will be exempt from taxation, and their properties respected.' I then bade him good-bye and he ordered a guard with me until I passed a certain point and at 1.30 P.M. I landed in Guabairo not at all tired, and the Lion was really a tame animal after all.

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

CHAPTER XV

AFFAIRS IN WASHINGTON

DURING all the excitement at Soledad I had been busy at home doing what I could to prevent a hasty recognition of the insurgents. The threatened action of Congress had been causing me not a little anxiety and I had written Secretary Olney to inquire of the State Department as to the rights and duties of American property-holders in Cuba in order that we might be guided in our future course. The State Department answered that they could not take the responsibility of advising me.

I then wrote as follows to General William F. Draper, one of the Massachusetts Congressmen:

BOSTON, *February 24*, 1896

MY DEAR GENERAL DRAPER:

Up to about November 29th, the insurgents had announced their policy of respecting foreign property, but on or about that date a number of American properties were attacked, including our own, and General Campos responded immediately to our request to send troops there and established a permanent guard of twenty-five men, giving us permission to arm an additional force, the Government furnishing arms. This guard has prevented the destruction of our factory buildings up to the present time. While upwards of fifty thousand tons of standing cane have been destroyed on our property by insurgents, still this amount, though large, represents but half of our crop.

and but a small portion of the value of the total amount of our Soledad property. The total cost of this property has been about \$1,400,000; the buildings, machinery, our twenty-two miles of railroad with its equipment, have so far not been injured to any extent, and these items of property alone, if destroyed, could not, in my opinion, be replaced at much less than \$1,000,000, but this is irrespective of cost.

Our own case is simply one instance of many, and the question now arises, in case the House and Administration follow the lead of the Senate Committee and recognize belligerency or independence, to whom can the American property-holders look for protection? We could hardly expect that Spain would continue to defend our rights; the insurgents are not in position to do so, even if they were disposed, and in my opinion the only alternative would be the landing of United States troops. Whether the country would be prepared to take such extreme action is a question that should be considered, and whether the sentimental feeling of sympathy with the Cubans should outweigh the property interests amounting to some \$30,000,000 of United States citizens in Cuba.

It would seem to me that before going further, the United States should decide exactly what she means to do; whether or not she will protect her property interests, and if not, she should advise their abandonment while there is time to save the lives of the Americans in charge. For without any armed protection and subject to the suspicions and attacks of both combatants, few, if any, would be safe.

The losses sustained by Americans in Cuba up to the present time are, in my opinion, of minor importance as compared with what still remains at stake; and whatever action is taken by the United States, it seems to me that due consideration to our future

security should be accorded us by our own Government.

Yours truly

EDWIN F. ATKINS

When the first fires were set in the cane fields of Soledad, as recorded in detail in the previous chapter, I immediately notified the State Department and also the Spanish Minister, which was the regular routine followed in all later difficulties, thus building up my case against the Spanish Government. I also caused the publication of the news of the intended destruction of American property through the Associated Press; the New York *World* printed a list of American estate values in Cuba estimated at \$20,000,000.

This projected campaign of destruction was in accordance with a general order signed by Máximo Gómez: 'Destroy all sugar estates; burn their cane and defences at their factories, as well as destroy their railroad lines. Every laborer shall be treated as a traitor who lends any assistance to these sugar factories.' Inquiry as to this change of policy on the part of the insurgents brought the following reports: that orders for general destruction of all property had been issued by the Commander-in-Chief Máximo Gómez; that the insurgents said they had knowledge that the American property-owners were not in sympathy with them; that the destruction of American property would lead to claims upon the Spanish Government and consequently complications between the United States

and Spain, which might force the United States to recognize the insurgents as belligerents. No doubt in that last clause lay the real ground of the matter.

Early in November, it had been announced that Estrada Palma was going to Washington to further the cause of the Cuban insurgents. Mr. Palma and other members of the Junta had been using every effort to arouse public sentiment against Spain, and with considerable success. For instance a mass meeting in Faneuil Hall had been arranged in Boston for November 26th, at which Governor Greenhalge, Curtis Guild, Josiah Quincy, Doctor G. C. Lorimer, and Doctor Edward Everett Hale were advertised to speak. After the burning of American properties was announced, I had no trouble in getting several of the intended speakers with whom I was acquainted to withdraw, and the meeting was abandoned. However, the Junta continued its agitation through the press and the public in general was made to believe that it was a war for independence conducted by Cuban patriots against Spain and that the entire Cuban population was in sympathy with the movement; whereas the better classes in Cuba were not then in sympathy with the insurrection and it was directed by a band of naturalized American citizens in New York and Florida.

When Congress assembled in December, a number of bills were introduced for the recognition of the insurgents as belligerents; and the sentiment

in Congress was so strong that, in spite of the strenuous opposition of President Cleveland, one of the bills was likely to pass. During this time I had made several trips to Washington, and in all my activities I was supported by other American property-owners in Cuba. I now went to Washington with Mr. Walter Beal, and during one day and evening we called upon many prominent Senators and Congressmen and explained the situation. Among these were Senators Hoar and Lodge of Massachusetts and Hale of Maine; Congressmen McCall and Walker of Massachusetts, and Hitt of Illinois, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. All listened attentively and acknowledged the danger of recognition of the insurgents as belligerents. I called upon Lodge in the evening at his house by invitation and went over the whole ground. He discussed the matter carefully, and asked me this question: 'Mr. Atkins, do you think that if the Cubans obtain their independence, they could establish a stable government?' I answered without hesitating that I did not believe the Cubans capable of maintaining a stable government. Whereupon he brought his hand down upon the table where we were sitting, and said: 'I am glad to hear you say that, for it is exactly my opinion.' I naturally left him feeling encouraged; but within a few days he was supporting and advocating a bill for recognition of belligerency in Cuba. After this interview with Lodge, I did not return to see him for many years, but went instead to

William Murray Crane, our junior Senator, whom I always found frank and outspoken.

It was a matter of vital importance to the Americans in Cuba that the belligerency resolutions should not be adopted; for as long as the United States was upon friendly terms with Spain, United States citizens in Cuba, who took no part in the insurrection and who recognized their duties to the Spanish Government, had a right to expect and to demand protection from that Government; and as a matter of fact, Washington was continually calling upon Madrid for such protection. Had belligerency been declared by Congress, Spanish obligations to American citizens would have ceased. As for the insurgents, they were powerless to afford any protection to foreigners, either against the Spanish army or their own following. In spite of their claim of having established a Government which was in authority throughout the Island and that the sugar estates acknowledged such Government and paid taxes to them, they were in fact never in possession of even a small town for more than a few days at a time. The only money paid them by the sugar estates was exacted through threats of burning the cane fields or destroying the factories. Many estate owners, even otherwise loyal Spaniards, paid to save their crops, only to find that the next band of insurgents that came along set fire to the fields and drove laborers away or killed them for daring to work.

Late in December I had information that

members of the New York Junta intended calling upon the Secretary of State to plead for recognition, and I so informed Mr. Olney, explaining to him that they were American citizens living in New York. He said he could not receive them as officials of the so-called Insurgent Government, but that he would receive them as individuals and have a talk with them. Among those who called upon Secretary Olney in December were Palma, duly accredited representative of the insurgents in the United States; Gonzalo de Quesada, later the Cuban Minister at Washington; and Benjamin Guerra, treasurer of the Junta, who some years later committed suicide. Mr. Olney, who was always an outspoken man, after listening to what they had to say, asked Palma if he was an American citizen. Palma replied that he was proud to acknowledge his citizenship. Mr. Olney then asked the same of the others, and received the same reply. He then asked if they had given orders to destroy the property of other American citizens in Cuba, to which Palma answered that while he had not done so, he knew and approved of such orders as a war measure in their struggle against Spain. Mr. Olney said: 'Well, gentlemen, there is but one term for such action. We call it arson.' With that he terminated the interview. This account was given me by Mr. Olney himself.

From the first I refused to pay the insurgents anything; and after President Cleveland's first proclamation we strictly adhered to the rules laid

down; in return we insisted upon our right to call upon the Madrid Government, through our Secretary of State, for protection of our lives and property. Such a course met with favor both at Washington and Madrid, and gained me the friendship of the Spanish Minister and the Spanish population in Cuba; but naturally it stirred up the enmity of the Cuban Junta. They well knew that I was one of the few American citizens having an extended acquaintance in Washington, who was thoroughly acquainted with the true conditions of affairs in the Island, and that I was not afraid to report to the Washington authorities whenever my opinion was asked. I found that I could not go to Washington without my visits to the State Department, Senators or Representatives being at once reported to the Junta in New York and to the insurgent leaders in Cuba: so I never registered at a hotel in Washington, and in making my calls never took a cab direct from my hotel, but picked one up at the cab stands in the street where I was not likely to be recognized. The insurgent agents in Boston told Mr. Hitt that I killed their people in Cuba and hunted them with bloodhounds! After a visit to Washington, when I had succeeded in heading off the bill for recognition of the insurgents, I read in the New York *Sun* that 'Mr. Atkins, the evil spirit of the White House, had again succeeded in defeating the proposed Cuban recognition.' I found during my visit in Washington that some of the political leaders there were taking advantage

of their position for stock speculations; that before their bills were presented they sold stocks short; and later, when a bill was defeated or withdrawn, they would cover their short sales. This information I obtained through the secret service agents of the Spanish Legation.

At the close of the year 1895, I received a verbal message from the Junta through Mr. Hugh Kelly, of New York, conveyed to him by a well-known merchant of Havana; I afterwards learned that he was a Mr. Culmel, of Trufin & Company, and was not suspected of Cuban affiliations, as he was a Dane by birth. I was cautioned against my activities at Washington, and was told that if I did not stop my visits there every bit of my property in Cuba would be destroyed. I replied through the same source as follows: 'The position taken by myself and associates is that of protection to American property interests in Cuba. It is entirely a defensive one, and we have no wish to assume the offensive, but no personal consideration will lead me to change my attitude in a course which I consider both honorable and just. With all sincerity I would suggest to these gentlemen that they weigh with the greatest care their future attitude toward American interests in the Island of Cuba.'

Mr. Kelly wrote me as follows:

January 24, 1896

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

I have been interviewed again this morning, and it is evident that you are a horrible thorn in the side of

the patriots. They have as good as admitted that the influences which you have arrayed against them in Washington render ineffective all that they have done thus far in the way of procuring legislation favoring them, and I have been instructed to say to you that if you will use these influences in their behalf now and withdraw your opposition to them, they will give you one hundred thousand dollars and make good all damage done at the Soledad, both before and after they have been accorded belligerent rights by this Government. I have answered that Mr. Atkins is too big a man to accept a bribe, however tempting the amount or conditions, and once having gone on record as having demanded that American properties be conserved and respected by them, they were only wasting their breath in temporizing with matters as far as you were concerned.'

Yours truly

HUGH KELLY

Later I confirmed all that Mr. Kelly had told the Junta, adding that they could neither scare me by threats of destroying my property nor bribe me by any amount they could offer or any promise of immunity; and until they stopped their destruction of American properties, I should continue to inform our Government at Washington, both in regard to their acts and intentions, as well as to the true condition in Cuba which they were misrepresenting; that while I was aware that they had it in their power to destroy my property in Cuba, I had other property in the United States which they could not touch, and they must remember that I could do far more damage to their cause in Wash-

ington than they could do me in Cuba; and that all I asked was that they respect the rights and property of American citizens in the Island.

When I told Dupuy de Lome of their offer and expressed doubts as to their ability to pay so large a bribe, he told me that the Junta had upon deposit at the time in several New York banks, which he named, some two million dollars, derived largely from subscriptions of Cuban cigarmakers in Havana, New York, and Florida; and in part from sums exacted from Cuban sugar planters through threats of destruction of their property. The cigarmakers had been organized some two years earlier and had regularly contributed a fixed sum every month from their wages. These contributions I heard of also through other sources and they are mentioned by O'Brien in 'A Captain Unafraid.'

In my attempt to stop the destruction of American properties, I had appealed to the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, and many leaders of the House and Senate. All deplored the fact, and acknowledged they were powerless to prevent it. I got no help until I met William Sulzer, a Representative from the Bowery. Sulzer had in his district some three thousand Cuban cigarmakers, naturalized citizens, and he had been an earnest advocate of the Cuban cause. He had introduced one of the bills for recognition of the insurgents, and was said to be preparing a speech upon the bill. I found that Palma was depending upon Sulzer to get the bill

through Congress, and I determined to get at him through some influential Tammany leaders. Tammany Hall was said to have contributed funds to the Cuban cause, probably for political reasons rather than from any sympathy with the insurrection; Sulzer owed his position to Tammany, and I knew would be guided by their leaders. There were many prominent Democrats in New York of high standing in the community who were members of the Tammany organization, and some of these men I knew. It was not, therefore, difficult for me to get an introduction to the Tammany Chieftain, Richard Croker. I called upon him, and explained my difficulties and my wish to meet Sulzer. Croker was standing over a stock-ticker watching the quotations. He listened to my story without showing much interest in it and asked no questions; but my introduction was from a liberal contributor to Tammany funds, and he wrote upon his card, 'Please attend to Mr. Atkins,' and told me to present it to Mr. Sulzer. In addition I obtained from Ellery Anderson, a New York man of national repute with whom I had important business relations, another introduction; and armed with these I took the first train to Washington, and looked up William Sulzer, whom I found in a lodging-house near the Capitol.

I called before ten in the morning, and sent up my card with the one from Croker. In a few minutes Sulzer, who was on the floor above, put his head over the banisters and called to me to come

up. He was in his shirt-sleeves and his face was covered with lather. He read the letter of introduction I had brought from George Gould, and asked if, as the letter stated, I was a friend of the writer. When I replied in the affirmative, he asked what I wanted and said that there was nothing that he would not do for 'George.' I told him that, knowing he was preparing a speech upon Cuban belligerency in the interests of the Cuban Junta, I wished to appeal to him for help in protecting my Cuban property, which these same people had partly burned and were threatening to destroy. This seemed to be no news to him, and he said that the Junta were determined to destroy everything in Cuba unless the United States Government recognized them by according belligerent rights to the insurgents. But he added: 'I can stop them from injuring your property.' It was immediately after this that I received the second message from the agent of the Junta through Mr. Kelly, offering me the handsome bribe; and Sulzer afterwards acknowledged to me that he knew of the offer. I surmised that he himself had suggested it to Palma. He assured me then that orders had been sent to the Junta to stop burning, and some days later I heard from both Soledad and Trinidad that insurgent leaders had ordered their followers not to set any more fires. Sulzer told me the orders had been sent on December 24, 1895; evidently the Junta, finding they could not intimidate me, concluded it was best to let me alone.

CHAPTER XVI

CONDITIONS IN 1896

ON March 10, 1896, I left Boston for Washington, where I had several conferences, and obtained a letter from Dupuy de Lome introducing me to General Pando. I had intended to join the New York-Cuba boat at Nassau and proceed to Cienfuegos by sea; but at Palm Beach I found some interruption in the steamship service, so I concluded to go by way of Tampa, as usual, and take the chance of crossing the Island from Havana.

At Havana conditions were deplorable; business was at a standstill, and the city, under martial law, was full of soldiers arriving and departing. Owing to the recent action at Washington regarding the recognition of the insurgents, the sentiment against Americans was strong. There was the added irritation that every day Cubans, captured under arms or arrested as spies, presented United States citizenship papers, and claimed and obtained the protection of the American Government. No matter what the personal opinion of the Consul might be, it was his plain duty to protect these paper citizens. Ramon Williams, who was charged by both sides with being prejudiced in favor of the other, had just resigned his office as Consul-General, and in May General Fitzhugh Lee went out as his successor. Both these men, who had no

illusions about the general run of the Cuban patriots, were constantly called upon to defend rebels against the Spanish Government who claimed American citizenship and had American papers.

The naturalization of Cubans was said to be a flourishing industry especially at Tampa and Key West; it was easy, also, to assume the name in a paper that was stolen, or passed from one to another as need arose for protection by Uncle Sam. Williams told me of one case of fraudulent papers issued years before that turned up at the consulate in the hands of a 'citizen.' It was difficult to prove fraud, and under the law neither the consuls nor even our State Department had power to question the validity of naturalization papers issued by any court. Some of the State courts, particularly in Florida where officers were of Cuban birth, issued quantities of such fraudulent certificates; and many of those who were acting as spies or were actively engaged in the revolt against Spain would undoubtedly have been executed under military rules but for the interference of our Government. Such cases brought us several times to the verge of war, which was only averted by the diplomacy of both countries.

Once at Havana my first thought was to get to Cienfuegos. It was impossible to go by rail via Matanzas, as bridges had been destroyed and communication interrupted; and a few weeks before Mr. Beal had found it impracticable to go by way

of Batabano. By that line, trains were still being attacked and connections were uncertain. The town itself had been partially burned by insurgents two days before. However, it was the only way. I called upon my old friend, Menendez, president of the steamship line on the south coast, and a loyal Spaniard. He said I could get through on a troop train to Batabano, and he gave me a letter to his steamship captain charging him to look after me.

The distance from Havana to Batabano is only thirty miles, yet we were several hours in covering it that morning. Our train carried a company of infantry and was preceded by a scout locomotive with an ironclad car filled with soldiers. All along the route were blockhouses, each with a guard; but stations, towns, and cane fields had been burned. The steamer was a fine new boat, and I was given one of the best rooms and a seat in the dining-saloon at the captain's right. The table was crowded with Spanish officers, and opposite me sat General Pin, who was taking over the command of the Cienfuegos district. He was a rough soldier who had risen from the ranks and was soon to prove himself a rascal. Learning I was an American, Pin began to abuse all things American and in this was joined by his officers. He explained how easy it would be to capture Boston, then New York and Washington, and hoped the opportunity for that conquest would fall to him. I listened, said little, and managed to keep my temper. Finally, when the chance came, I said that I hoped when he came

to Boston it would not be as an enemy, but as a friend, and, in the usual Spanish manner, I offered my house — 'It is yours' — which may mean much or little. The Captain, to end a disagreeable scene, ordered a bottle of champagne with which we toasted each other, and later had a long and interesting conversation. By dinner time the General had learned of my influential Spanish connections, offered a courteous apology, and the next morning we had breakfast together at García's. This incident was typical of all my intercourse with Spanish officers. I had some trying experiences with men of all grades from Spanish grandees to the most brutal and ignorant; but I seldom failed, by the use of a little diplomacy and hospitality when opportunity offered, to win their respect and I was always treated with courtesy.

On the train from Havana, I noticed a somewhat disreputable looking American, with a black coat and a battered black derby hat. He came through the car and asked me if I could speak Spanish, for he wanted to get his trunk from the train to the steamer, and no one could understand him. It was no time to be seen talking to questionable strangers, so I told him that when the train reached Batabano to watch for me when I got off, and I would give directions about the baggage. I saw no more of him until after dinner that evening on the boat. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and I took a chair on deck near a group of Spanish officers. Presently this American came along and drew up a chair near me.

He said to me in a low voice: 'You are Mr. Atkins, are you not?'

I said: 'Yes, who are you?'

He said: 'I am Sylvester Scovel.'

'The devil you are! What are you doing here? And don't you know that there is an order outstanding to have you arrested and shot if you returned to the Island after being sent away?'

'Yes, I know that. But I am travelling under an assumed name, and I am going to Gómez' camp for the New York *World*, to interview the insurgents and make a report to my newspaper.'

I told him that we could not talk there, but I would like to have a few words with him if he would come to my stateroom later on, which he did. He asked for an introduction to some of our people at Trinidad, which would help him get off to the insurgent camp. This I told him I could not give him, but that I would write to our agent there, Mr. Turner, to look out for him if he got into trouble. I also told him that I was desirous of getting information about the insurgents and asked him to report to me at Cienfuegos in person if he got away from Gómez alive — which I doubted.

Scovel went to see Mr. Turner, and got into the insurgent camp from there. The New York *World* was to send a yacht to meet him on a certain date at the sand spit which juts out into the sea beyond Trinidad. But when he reached there, there was no yacht; and he spent the night swinging a lantern, with no response. He then started back, hoping to

make his way by land to Cienfuegos, but was soon arrested by a pair of Civil Guards, who took him to Trinidad. The Guards did not think that he understood Spanish; but he told me they were discussing whether they should turn him over to the civil court at Trinidad, or shoot him and report that it was done while he was trying to escape — which was the customary way of settling doubtful cases. They finally concluded to turn him over to the military authorities, and sent him on the boat to Cienfuegos, where he managed to get word to me that he was without funds to pay his way even if he got out of his present predicament. I sent him some Spanish gold through one of the Spanish minor officers whom I knew, and then reported to the commanding general to whom I made an appeal to spare his life. This was done for me, and they got him to Havana, and then off the Island in some way. This is one of the several lives which I saved; Americans, Cubans, and Spanish deserters — they all came to me when in trouble. I never heard of Scovel again until after the American occupation.

I had hoped that my arrival in Cuba would not be mentioned by the newspapers there or in this country, as all my movements were reported to the insurgent agents; so my consternation may be imagined when I read in a Cienfuegos paper: 'Yesterday our most distinguished friend Mr. Atkins arrived here. He is a wealthy proprietor and owner of the Central Soledad. Mr. Atkins is a most distinguished person, and, although an Amer-

ican citizen, is an enthusiastic admirer of Spain.'

I was most cordially received both by Spaniards and Cubans. I at once delivered my letter to General Pando, who happened to be in town; and although I had been accused of being a Cuban sympathizer, he was very polite and attentive. A little incident of my call illustrates the good manners of the better class of Spanish officers. It was a cold day with a norther blowing; and I was no sooner seated and began to speak than the General called an aide and ordered him to bring my hat. At first I took this as a sign of dismissal; but instead he begged me to put on my hat as he himself had a cold and, with true Spanish courtesy, would not put on his own cap until I had covered my head.

I went to Soledad on the morning of March 21st, and found the mill grinding.

March 21, 1896

DEAR KATE:

The place looks like a military garrison, the batey is all barricaded and all approaches are guarded. There is a stone fort behind the sugar house with twenty-seven soldiers in charge of an officer. Besides these we have 125 more in our own force, of which fifty are cavalry. These are all picked men and seem well drilled. The Spanish force is always guarding the buildings; then there is a private force protecting the cane cutters, escorting them out to their work and back; the cavalry act as scouting parties and keep a lookout from the hills. There is another force in a fort covering the pontoon, and still another force travelling in an armed car with the trains. Then there are guerilla forces at Santa Rosalia, Los Guaos, and Josefa,

with forts at all the crossings of the river and a large column of troops in our rear near the hills. There are plenty of workmen who are ready to work if sure of being protected, but the insurgents have killed a number where there is no suitable protection. At one place they found some men working and cut off their hands and feet; at another place two days ago they killed seventeen laborers — this by people who are appealing to the United States to stop the barbarous warfare of the Spanish troops. Two days ago some of our cane was fired by a party of four; one of them, a boy of sixteen, was caught. He lived near by and his mother was a woman whom we had been feeding out of charity to keep her from starving. . . . The condition of the country is terrible; a reign of terror exists, and the country people have fled to points of safety or have joined the insurgents. Every house is destroyed, fences are down, and cattle are roaming wild in every direction. It seems as if we were back in feudal times defending ourselves with our own retainers against invasion. Others who are strong enough are doing the same, while those who are weak must abandon everything.

Yours affectionately

NED

SOLEDAD, *March 24*, 1896

DEAR KATE:

Our mounted force is really a fine body of men, mostly old hands here who have an interest in the place, for to them it is home and a living which they can't find elsewhere now. They are fine riders, have good uniforms and are well mounted. Their captain, Vilariño, was our time-keeper formerly. He lived with his family in a little house on the place where he had two or three cars and some oxen by which he gained a

little money in hauling cane, besides his salary. Claudio Sarria destroyed everything Vilariño had before our force was formed. Then Vilariño took command. You should see these fellows make a dash at a hill. They carry their rifles in the right hand with the butt on the knee. To-night I stood on the balcony as the workmen returned. There were over one hundred, with our mounted guards (fifty) in front and the infantry in the rear. The oxen are also driven in for protection, and the night guards posted. At eight o'clock the bell strikes and every one not working goes to bed. Two guards are stationed in the house, and one outside with fixed bayonet. His duty is to challenge everybody who passes; and every now and then you hear his queer *vive* with the response. All this seems like playing at soldier, but upon places where full precautions have not been taken the workmen are killed for no other reason than that they are trying to earn an honest living for themselves and families. . . . I have been making inquiries regarding the proportion of blacks in the insurrection. The estimates run from fifty to eighty per cent, the former by Cubans who have some sympathy with the cause. I hear from various sources that with the leaders are a few negroes supposed to have come from Haiti or Santo Domingo who wear rings in both their ears and noses. One young man whose town was burned told me that he saw them himself. . . . Every day we see fires in the hills said to be the rebel camps being destroyed by the troops. They have been living there with women and some children, and have places where they repair arms, make shoes, et cetera; also hospitals for the wounded. They also raise vegetables and drive in cattle. The troops have been there over a week, and seem to keep busy. If these places are cleaned out, it will add to the safety here, as they are but a short distance from us.

Owing to the excitement of the times, things about the house were somewhat neglected, but I am gradually getting them into shape again and doing a little fixing up. Yesterday while working about my rose garden I was bitten by something, probably a tarantula, and had a swelled hand for a while — the only accident of the war so far.

With love to all at home

Yours affectionately

NED

When I went out, I always rode with a rifle across my knees in case of need, but never during the three crops, 1896-1897-1898, did I have any occasion to use it, although operating the estate against the decrees of Gómez which carried the death penalty, and being warned several times that orders had been issued for my capture.

Beyond Soledad one could have ridden across country to the Trinidad Mountains without finding a fence and hardly a human being. The guinea grass, where it had not been burned, reached to a man's shoulder when on horseback and it was difficult to get through it. Under such conditions it was easy for insurgent bands to scatter and avoid the troops. Both troops and rebels were constantly passing through Soledad, the latter in small bands that kept away from the batey, so I hardly ever saw them. The troops seldom overtook them, although there were skirmishes now and then, chiefly between insurgents and the guerrillas, who were always mounted. Companies of Civil Guards some-



GUARDS RETURNING WITH THE WORKMEN



times stopped for breakfast with us. I liked to see them round, but it was quite a task to feed them and their horses on short notice.

When I went to Cienfuegos it was always by boat. I went down to the river by rail, with a strong guard in an ironclad car in the rear of my own, and our little steamer, the *Catalina*, had three or four riflemen in a tower made of boiler plates on the upper deck. These men kept a sharp lookout, particularly at the numerous bends of the river. The captain, the faithful Marmí, managed the wheel from a second iron tower.

Every one in Cienfuegos was very blue over the situation, as all had suffered and some had lost everything. Apestiguia's beautiful country house at the entrance to the harbor had just been burned. Mr. Fowler's estate, Parque Alto, had lost all its cane; his other place, Dos Hermanos, was grinding, but had very little cane left, and Mr. Fowler himself looked old and careworn. There were eleven places about Cienfuegos working after a fashion. Mrs. Torriente and Clotilde I found about as usual. Mr. Murray and his family had left for Jacksonville, where the next year Santiago became secretary of the local Cuban committee. From Cienfuegos small towns could frequently be seen burning. The houses were mere huts, but they represented homes and shelter for some poor people, and their loss added to the destruction and misery. Every one wanted to see an end to these horrors, but no one seemed to have an idea of when or how it

would come. But, in spite of the general misery the holiday celebrations were not forgotten.

SOLEDAD, *April 1, 1896*

DEAR KATE:

This is Semana Santa and most of our people have refused to work. We have very few Spanish laborers, as most of them have gone into service as soldiers or private guards or gone to Spain. The Cubans, who a week ago were begging for work, have most of them gone off for the holidays after earning about five dollars. It makes no difference to them that we are protecting their lives at a heavy expense; they cause us to stop all the time. There are over a hundred now loafing about the batey who will not work and do not dare to go away fearing they will be caught by one party or the other. I fear it will be several days before we can collect men enough to get well to work again, although we are running on half time only. . . . Captain Beal has returned to his place. I confess he has more pluck than I should have, although he is safer than I should be. I do not think he will stay there permanently, but he wants to get his fences up and keep his cattle out of the cane fields. They are now eating up the young cane and would soon destroy next year's crop. . . . I have returned from passing the night at Hormiguero. During the evening the fields of Escarza's estate close by were fired and some shots were heard during the night. They are going on quietly there at present, but have lost the greater part of their cane. The insurgent commander in their district was formerly a slave in Mrs. Fowler's family.

There was a fight yesterday in the hills back of Soledad, twenty-five insurgents killed or wounded, and seven troops.

Yours affectionately

NED

SOLEDAD, *April 2, 1896*

DEAR KATE:

We have been very quiet here, and I have taken the opportunity to take a look about the place to form an opinion of what should be done in the future. It makes me sick to see the unnecessary destruction. Many of our fields are totally lost and will have to be replanted. If we undertake the work now and this anarchy continues, the fields will again be destroyed. Most of our losses have been caused by negroes, and the lowest class of people, but *all* duly commissioned officers in the 'Army of Liberty,' carrying out general orders of their chiefs and a policy of destruction and murder endorsed by the New York Junta who are American citizens. . . . Fires continue in every direction, particularly among the potreros towards the hills. This can lead finally to but one result, starvation for the poor of both sides, but the insurgents do not seem to consider this. They live up in the hills in sight of this place and there they dance and have their cock-fights and other amusements until driven out by the troops. . . . They let us alone, which is all I can hope for.

I am glad our friends take so much interest in me, but they must not overestimate the danger. The conditions call for more discretion than valor, and our warlike measures are precautionary. . . . Mr. Welsh is here from Constancia, where they had an unfortunate experience lately. A gang of laborers were left for a while unprotected and a band of the 'Army of Liberty' rushed in upon them and began chopping them up with machetes; over a dozen unarmed people were killed or wounded seriously. These acts so often repeated are raising an intense feeling upon the part of all respectable people.

A small band was on a distant part of this place yesterday under leadership of a notorious thief. These

are no doubt after plunder of any kind, but will burn cane in the Cause when they get a chance.

Yours affectionately

NED

The following is one of my early letters to Robert, who was then a little boy of seven:

SOLEDAD, *April 6, 1896*

DEAR BOB:

Yesterday afternoon when I was dressing, a little tame pigeon flew into my room and would not go out. She got on my bureau and kept looking at herself in the glass and fixing her feathers; then she laid an egg and flew away. She belongs to a funny little man who lives in the garden. This man was once a powder maker in Spain before he came here; the bandits heard about him and they tried to steal him away, and we had to hide him. When they came he got a very old shotgun and loaded it with some of his own powder; then he got behind a wall to shoot the bandits. He is a very little man and the gun was very big and the powder was very strong; so when he fired it, it knocked him head over heels on the grass; and he ran into the house to get away.

We are grinding lots of sugar cane to-day. I think you would like to have some of it.

Give my love to Ted and Baby sister, and kiss Mamma and all the rest for me.

Your affectionate

PAPA

That same day Mr. Turner was writing from Trinidad:

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

To me the immediate future does not look very bright, for whoever is on top for the moment think

they do well to give us a squeeze. . . . There is little movement among the insurgents in the valley: a fire nearly every day, or night, either on Schmidt's or at Guaimiro seems to be the extent of their ambition at present. Once in a while the guerrillas make an excursion to the foothills when some language and gunpowder are expended, leaving us in ignorance which of the two materials have done most toward finishing the war. We have small parties of troops at many points covering the principal parts of the valley, and two columns who are supposed to be to help any garrison requiring it. Our patana has ten soldiers on board to protect her down the river, and all the guajiros taking sugar have their contingent. In fact troops seem to be quite abundant. We have about 2,000,000 arrobas of cane still in the fields, which we hope to get through with by the 20th or 25th of May, so that we should finish with about 30,000 bags.

Yours truly

WILLIAM TURNER

I left for home, via Havana, the last of April, 1896, and on May 5th, in accordance with his suggestion, I sent a report to Secretary Olney, which I quote in part:

During my visit I took advantage of every opportunity of getting the views of various classes of people in regard to the insurrection, and its possible solution. A long residence in Cuba and an extended acquaintance among the people enabled me to do this while attending to my own business interests. Among those with whom I talked were General Weyler and General Pando, the heads of some of the largest banking and commercial houses in Havana (American, German, Spanish, and Cuban), as well as many planters both

Spanish and Cuban from various districts, also working and country men of both classes. I found among the people having interests in the Island an almost universal feeling that some compromise measure should be sought to bring the war to a speedy termination. . . .

In seeking opinion regarding the possible solution of the troubles, I found a very general feeling both among Spanish residents and native Cubans favoring autonomy (home rule). It is fair to say that the Spaniards do not think that the Cubans would accept anything short of independence, while the Cubans do not believe that the Spaniards would grant any concessions. Yet personally individuals of both classes favored autonomy as a solution. The most intelligent of these people expressed a wish that the United States might use its friendly services to such end. Among the more conservative Spaniards, those having interests at stake, I found an inclination to annexation, although few believed in its practicability. . . .

Upon the insurgent side, the negro element, together with adventurers from abroad (of whom there are many) who are seeking power or gain, are not inclined to settle the matter short of absolute independence of the Island; and it is from the intermediate class of both Spaniards and Cubans, the property-owners and the peaceable citizens, that a solution by means of compromise must be expected. These are already more than anxious for an early termination of the war upon any reasonable basis, as they are fully aware that the resources of the country will soon be entirely destroyed if the present deplorable condition of affairs continues.

On my way North I had some very satisfactory interviews at Washington, and was listened to with

more interest than I could have expected. I wrote Captain Beal: 'Our Congress is talking of adjourning on May 18th and the country will feel much relieved after they have gone home. While Congress is in session every member wishes to meddle in our international relations.' Captain Beal's answer was characteristic: 'I wish Congress would adjourn and go to the devil. They are making matters very unpleasant for us here.'

When the Spanish Cortes met May 11th, the Queen's Message set forth a larger measure of home rule for Cuba than the autonomists had ever hoped for; the Cortes asked authority, if the case presented itself, to come to terms with certain of the rebels. I have always felt that had it not been for the sentimental meddling and cash support of some so-called American citizens, a middle course of right and justice in the way of autonomy for Cuba might have been carried through at not too great a cost to the pride of Spain.

CHAPTER XVII

PROGRESS OF INSURRECTION

NOTHING was accomplished in a military way by either side during the summer of 1896, although there was much talk of proposed activities by the insurgents. The insurgents did little and the Spanish troops did less. Meantime more and more men were joining the insurgents and both volunteers and troops were deserting wholesale.

From P. M. Beal

CIENFUEGOS, July 20, 1896

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

How can you account for the rebels passing up and down with impunity? And if by chance a battle does take place, there is but one rebel killed to about three thousand charges fired. There are more officers parading this town than privates. And one hears on every side, 'What are they doing here?' There is no denying the Spanish soldiers are very brave men. On their long marches under this tropical sun they are patient and uncomplaining. They get along with poor food and little of it, and they fight like machines. But the higher officials are responsible that these poor fellows accomplish nothing. A good Spaniard of standing told me this morning that it made no difference whether there were 100,000 or 500,000 troops in the Island. The war would continue as long as the officers could profit by it. I am much of the same opinion. Look at the impotency of the navy: filibusters, arms

and ammunition are being landed on all parts of the coast, and yet they have caught but one, a little insignificant fishboat, and that was a bare accident. You may judge how correct our reports of killed are. We are depending on the Government to give us the killed on the rebel side; and on the rebels to give us the number killed on the Government side. It requires more than a knowledge of algebra to solve the problem. Indeed, it seems to me that there ought to be very few left on either side.

Some two weeks ago the rebel cabecillo Sixto Roque passed up accompanied by some sixty guerrillas who had gone over to him with their whole equipment. He also had three mules loaded with arms and ammunition which he had obtained in some way, directly or indirectly, from Spanish military sources. It is said that much dissatisfaction prevails in the ranks because of non-payment of salaries and many are joining the other side in consequence. Soldiers, being without money, are learning that cartridges answer the purpose very well, and they make use of their knowledge to the detriment of the Government. There are women right in this town who in return for favors receive cartridges in payment. These cartridges are taken out of town in small quantities and deposited where the rebels can obtain them. This is one of the industries that calls Claudio Sarria down at frequent intervals. You may depend upon it the time for the Government and rebels to come to an understanding has passed except possibly through foreign intervention. The Government says it will institute substantial reforms as soon as the rebellion is put down. The people here wonder why they don't institute reforms in Puerto Rico where there is no rebellion.

Very truly yours

P. M. BEAL

As to the preparation for the coming crop, both on Soledad and Guabairo, I held steadily to my course through the uncertainties of the following months. All possible expenses, consistent with the preservation of the estate and making of the crop, were cut down; no attention was paid to 'decrees' from either side, and we worked steadily on, determined to yield only to direct printed orders of the Government, or to force. Moreover, our private forces this year were not entirely dependent upon Government equipment: for I petitioned, and in due course received permission, to send down ammunition, thirty Winchester rifles, and a magazine gun for Captain Beal. In June I outlined my policy to Mr. Williams as follows:

Regarding the field work, I will decide whether or not future prospects warrant our going to the expense of caring for our fields; *you* will decide whether or not local conditions will permit your doing it. I think best to give you directions to clear all the fields that you can, beginning with those which would best warrant the outlay and making the outlay as reasonable as you can. We must either do this and risk some money in the expense, or abandon them, which means going out of business. I believe that circumstances warrant a moderate outlay in saving our fields, or such of them as will repay the expense. If you find that local circumstances will not permit you to do the work, then you are to decide upon that point, notwithstanding your decision may be contrary to these directions.

In a general way, this method of procedure held in regard to our policy on the estate. I, with my



OX TEAM BRINGING CANE TO MILL



affiliations in the United States, was the better judge of general conditions and prospects; Williams, on the spot, knew whether those prospects were realizable.

We had never received the promised detachment of Civil Guards, and our chief troubles were not with the insurgents, but with the guerrillas with whom the Government were replacing troops needed in the field. On posts occupied by guerrillas, and some of those occupied by officers of the regular service, they had established butcheries and made use of their official position to intimidate country people in charge of potreros, thus leaving the coast clear for cattle-stealing. This business went from bad to worse, and some of them were actually stealing cattle and shipping them to Havana. The guerrillas made active trouble at Guabairo and the people on the colonia were constantly harassed and menaced by them. Captain Beal, who was still living in Cienfuegos, received warnings nearly every day through friendly sources.

The lieutenant at Soledad was also making trouble and took every opportunity to insult and annoy Mr. Williams and Captain Beal. Between the bumptious lieutenant and the guerrillas they were having a hard time and both were anxious to exchange our troops for Civil Guards. These Guards, the best of the Spanish forces, were always on the side of good order and their officers were our staunch friends.

Cienfuegos was in a deplorable condition.

From P. M. Beal

CIENFUEGOS, July 11, 1896

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

No sanitary measures have been adopted. Smallpox extends to all parts of the city where there are tenements. The rags used for the sick are thrown into the streets where they are carried up and down by the wind and by curs who delight in playing with such trash. Smallpox and pernicious fevers are very fatal, particularly to children. I am informed a large trench has been dug in the cemetery where the dead are thrown in during the night and covered with quicklime. Both of my contractors succumbed to the smallpox. The death-rate from this disease is now on the wane, I suppose from lack of victims. Yellow fever is very epidemic and of an alarming type, and many of the troops are dying.

Yours very truly

P. M. BEAL

Captain Beal was as usual keeping in with both sides. He was, for instance, in constant communication with a certain *courrier* who reported various wild stories of insurgent doings. Gómez was the mystery of the summer and was reported everywhere at once. Maceo was reported to have died a dozen times before he was actually killed in December. With the better class of rebels Captain Beal was on good enough terms, which accounted for the fact that Guabairo, undefended though it was, had much of its cane intact. In August he wrote of planting 5300 little coffee trees — a present from the rebels. But, although Beal had verbal permission to work from insurgent com-

manders, Antonio Abreu appeared with some twenty men one day in September, drove the men in from the fields and threatened to kill any one caught working again. He also gave notice to stop field work in general and left a printed order from their Government prohibiting weeding, planting, and cutting cane. All who disobeyed this would be considered traitors to the Republic and dealt with accordingly. Of course Captain Beal had to stop, but only for a time, for we had all learned that we could ignore decrees if we were strong enough to defend ourselves and were in the good graces of local leaders. Shortly after, the guerrillas erected four small forts on Guabairo, and Captain Beal went on with his work.

In June there opened a new, and vexatious, chapter in regard to our squad of Government troops. On the 13th, we received from our manager at the Soledad Estate the following cable: 'Order received to withdraw regular troops from Soledad unless paid by estate. Cable answer.' As I seriously doubted the advisability of agreeing to pay the Spanish Government for protection which was due to us, I replied as follows: 'From this date until further instructions, pay troops if necessary to prevent withdrawal.' I wrote Olney of my advices as to the special insurgent threats against our property, and the inadvisability of withdrawing troops at such a time. I requested the opinion of his Department as to whether we could properly be expected by the Spanish Government to pay for such

protection as they were willing to accord us and whether such payment, if continued, could be considered as a waiver of our rights to claim protection from them, for we wished to avoid taking a position that could not be sustained by our Government.

The next day I received a second cable from Soledad that the Government would withdraw all troops from estates on October 15th. Like other decrees of Weyler, these were executed in some cases and not in others. General Pin made us pay, and, as we afterwards learned, put the money in his own pocket. The arrangement was lucrative for him, and on October 15th, the date when troops were to be withdrawn and were withdrawn in some cases, ours were allowed to remain, until January when General Pin was relieved of his command. The payments were \$598 in Spanish gold for each month from June 1, 1896, to January 1, 1897.

In the United States, Congress assembled early in December and President Cleveland's Message contained a calm, dispassionate statement of the situation in Cuba which, naturally, was not pleasing to the extremists on either side. He urged autonomy as a solution of Spain's trouble with Cuba and saw no just reason why the pacification of the Island might not be effected on that basis. But the reasonable temper engendered by the Message was almost immediately disturbed by news of the death of Maceo. Insurgent sympathizers realized that now or never they must get in their work, and reports were circulated that Maceo had been en-

trapped under a flag of truce and assassinated. Public opinion was greatly inflamed, and Senator Cameron rushed through the Foreign Relations Committee a resolution to recognize the Republic of Cuba.

The public was dumbfounded by the passage of the Cameron resolution. A semi-panic at once took place in the stock market and protests poured into Washington. The Secretary of State backed by the President immediately came out with the statement that the prerogative of recognition of a foreign power lay with the Administration, and that the Committee's bill, even if it passed both Houses, would be considered by the President merely as a recommendation. His course was upheld by the entire business community of the country, and there was a very marked change in the tone of the press. Confidence was restored, and the feeling prevailed that no action whatever would be taken during that session which would be adverse to the wishes of the Administration.

On December 8th, I wrote de Lome: 'If Spain would only soon take advantage of her present success by the granting of autonomy, the danger of action at Washington would at once cease as well as the opportunity of inflammatory speeches.' De Lome was unwavering in his stand for reform and autonomy. He felt that the death of Maceo and the attitude of the American Executive should be considered sufficient reason to make the first steps in the political movement for which we all were working.

But the authorities in Cuba certainly were doing little to pave the way for a policy of reconciliation. At Cienfuegos, in December, 1896, one hundred and sixty-nine civilians were arrested on suspicion, among them many prominent men, merchants, lawyers, doctors, both administrators of Terry's estates, and the French Vice-Consul. Most of them were almost immediately released, and many thought the whole affair a blackmailing scheme. At Manzanillo there was no doubt of such a motive. An enterprising judge picked out two prominent men and every few days squeezed five hundred dollars from them by committing them to jail, and as regularly releasing them on payment of a 'fine.' The judge was caught 'in flagrante delicto,' and the result was his own imprisonment.

The Spanish authorities were also making trouble for the planters. In August the Havana papers had published an evidently inspired statement that Weyler was going to issue a decree against grinding. This decree was never issued formally, at least so far as the Province of Santa Clara was concerned, but everything possible was done to hamper and annoy the planters. Captain Beal was probably right when he said that Weyler meant to prevent the crop being made without taking the responsibility of prohibiting it. Several reasons were given for this policy; the probable correct one was that Weyler meant to prevent insurgents from levying tribute on estates for permission to grind, as undoubtedly had been done in many instances: and

it was also true that he wished to devastate the country which was affording subsistence to the rebels.

Until mid-February, 1897, when formal permission to grind was given, the policy, for which headquarters blamed local officers and local officers blamed headquarters, was continued. I carefully refrained from asking permission to grind, as, in the absence of orders, I had every right to suppose that grinding would not be interfered with. I stated my policy with great care to Mr. Olney, as I wished to convey notice if possible through his Department to the Spanish Government that we meant to claim damages for any injury to crops, based on an estimated value, from and after June 1, 1896.

CHAPTER XVIII

GUERRILLA WARFARE

I LEFT Boston for Cuba on January 4, 1897. In Washington I had a long and confidential chat with Mr. Olney. Matters were not so advanced as I could wish, but I could see no very serious difficulty in the way of a settlement. Mr. Olney approved the course I had taken about grinding, and was ready to do what he could to help me. I spent over an hour with Dupuy de Lome. We exchanged views upon the situation; and as for my personal difficulties, he told me he had just received a cable from Canovas, the Spanish Prime Minister, saying he had cabled Weyler about Soledad and had recommended me to Weyler's special consideration. De Lome had already communicated directly with Ahumada at Havana and had received word that his recommendation had been passed on to Weyler. De Lome gave me, among others, a letter to Montoro, the leader of the Autonomists, which led to long conferences with him. I came to know Montoro very well and found him a fine man. He has held office until quite recently, and our acquaintance has continued to the present time. De Lome gave me a special letter to Weyler, saying that I was more loyal to the Spanish Government than their own Spanish citizens, and commending me to

his attention. Mr. Olney had also given me a letter to Fitzhugh Lee, directing him to take me to Weyler, present my case, and insist that I should be allowed to grind.

When I reached Havana, I lost no time in calling upon Weyler. All the leading Spanish merchants and bankers had been trying to bring influence to bear upon him to change his attitude toward the sugar estates, and many of them were standing round the door at the entrance of the Palace when Lee and I called on General Weyler. As Lee could not speak Spanish, he took along an interpreter who was an insurgent sympathizer. I presented de Lome's letter which Weyler read; Olney's was translated by the interpreter. Weyler then ignored General Lee completely and addressed me in Spanish. I stated my case: that all my men were on the place, about a thousand of them ready to work, that he would cause me great loss if we were not allowed to proceed; that if he insisted, of course I should respect his orders, but in that case I should refer the matter to my Government, who would take it up at Madrid. Weyler answered: 'Now I have not issued orders to stop grinding, but my advice to you is not to attempt it. I have got a large number of troops over in your section, and I am just ready to commence a campaign against the insurgents. You had better wait until I clean those fellows out.'

'Well, General Weyler,' I said, 'we have our own private guards there on the estate, and with these

guards I think I can protect the property and the workmen.'

'I advise you not to do this,' was the response. 'But if you don't want to take my advice, you can do what you please.'

'In that case, General,' said I, 'I will cable over and start the grinding.'

Weyler had said to me incidentally: 'All you planters have been paying the insurgents.'

'I have not paid them anything,' I answered.

'I know better,' said he. 'I have proof you have been paying them.'

All through the interview Weyler had been talking in rather a loud, high-pitched voice. As we went down the Palace stairs, Lee, who had not understood a word, asked me what he had said. 'Well, he practically told me I was a liar.'

Lee was a peppery fellow, and with an oath cried, 'I am going right back to talk to him again.'

I grabbed him by the coat as he was starting upstairs. 'Don't do that,' I said. 'He told me I could go on with my work, and I am going to send a cable to Cienfuegos to start the grinding.'

The group of Spanish merchants at the door stopped me.

'Well, what did Weyler say to you? We've all been denied admittance.'

'He told me I could go ahead and start grinding,' said I, 'and I am on my way to the cable office.'

Weyler had charged our troubles to General Pin, whom he had removed and replaced by General

Prats. Our old friends, Goytesolo and Mr. Fowler, were among those who had not been able to get at Weyler. Their policy, contrary to mine, was not to grind until they had official permission.

I was received very politely by Ahumada and Palmorola; in fact, I was treated with the greatest consideration by every one. Even the officers were courteous and my Spanish friends were never more polite. Havana was in a worse state than the year before; fifteen thousand sick soldiers were there, and there was also a great deal of misery and sickness among the refugees from the country districts that had been vacated by order of the Government. Fifteen hundred cases of smallpox were reported the previous week, and there were probably four thousand in all — smallpox was not among the troops who, for the most part, had fevers. The troops had been transferred from Pinar del Rio, where matters for the time were quiet, into Havana and Matanzas, where both sides seemed to have been burning and destroying everything in their path. Large estates of loyal residents were burned by troops in order to leave no protection for the insurgents. People were amazed and terrified at this new campaign.

At Cienfuegos all was quiet. Captain Beal met me, and also General Pin, who was on the point of leaving. Pin told me he had numerous dispatches from Weyler ordering him not to prohibit grinding by notification, but to impede it by such means as arresting laborers, driving off cattle, cutting off supplies by railway, etc. Pin brought one of Weyler's

orders to me at my room in the hotel at Cienfuegos late at night. He would not let me copy it, but from memory I immediately wrote out a translation of it, which I sent to Washington.

On January 19th, I arrived at Soledad, and the troubles there are summed up in a letter to Secretary Olney.

SOLEDAD, *January 22, 1897*

MY DEAR SECRETARY OLNEY:

They commenced cane cutting upon January 8th; on the 12th some forty laborers were arrested and taken from the fields to town, where they were set at liberty without trial, and at once returned; January 17th, upon request of Yzquierdo, colonel of guerrillas, my manager stopped work, as it was said that the new General, Prats, would arrive with authority to start grinding, which did not prove true.

January 19th, I arrived at 6 A.M., and at once gave orders to start again. January 20th, a captain of guerrillas went to one of our tenancies (Beal & Company), all citizens of Boston, and ordered all field hands working there to town to obtain new permits, his lieutenant having previously taken their permits and destroyed them; he then carried orders to the captains of other districts on our place to do the same.

In telephoning from point to point the Government makes use of our private lines at their pleasure. By tapping the wire I took off the following message from the captain of guerrillas to his subordinate: 'My orders are to send all men to town to secure passes. I have no order to stop work. I will come over at two o'clock and if men have not left will arrest them.' An hour later this captain, Severino Perez, came to my house and I asked to see his order; he said that his order was verbal, but came from the military commander in Cienfuegos.



FORMER SLAVES — SIN CEDULA (RIGHT) (*see page 97*)



LOADING CANE



The gang of two hundred laborers from Beal's, out of the one thousand men then on our place, were sent to town, some fourteen miles. The same was tried with a second gang working in another district, but a question of authority arising between the captain of guerrillas and the army officer in charge, the men were not disturbed.

I at once went to town. The military commander knew nothing of the order, but promised to investigate and report by 8 P.M., which he failed to do. The colonel of guerrillas whose captain brought the order said that he had heard of the occurrence, but did not give the order; he also promised to investigate and report, but failed to do so, and I was referred to General Prats in the field.

Beal & Company then protested before the American Consul, notifying the Spanish authorities that the place was left unprotected from fire, and that they would be held responsible for losses.

... January 22d, application was made to the military commander at Cienfuegos for passes for the return of the two hundred men, and he said he could issue passes for the twenty-four hours only and that the men must return daily.

The above rule is not generally applied as I have evidence. We continue grinding upon a limited scale, and at considerable loss, rather than submit to stoppage by such methods, and at an opportune time will present claim for damages, which I fully believe will, in this case, be settled.

Yours truly

E. F. ATKINS

The following Sunday we received a similar order. General Prats had now arrived in Cienfuegos, and when I communicated with him he said to pay no

attention to the order; he would come up to see me. I sent out a cavalry troop well mounted and in new uniforms to meet the General at the boundary of the estate, a few miles distant. I met him at the door of the vivienda with our official family. The General's escort was quite a large body of guerrillas in command of Yzquierdo. I took Prats and the guerrilla officers upstairs where breakfast was prepared and invited them to be seated at the table. Prats said he could not possibly remain, as he had to return at once to Cienfuegos; but I told him in that case he must at least drink a cocktail with me, which he was very willing to do. He told me then that we had been accused of paying the insurgents. I denied this accusation and invited him to inspect the books at the office where all these payments had been clearly entered, showing that the money was paid to General Pin. While we were conversing, our house servants set out a very attractive breakfast. As Prats was evidently hungry and had a long ride before him, I persuaded him to sit down at the table and join me at breakfast. We wound up the breakfast with champagne, and after a couple of hours I was able to explain things satisfactorily.

On leaving the house the guerrillas gathered about the door and Prats addressed them in a loud voice so that all could hear, giving them orders to protect us in every way, and telling their officers that if these orders were not obeyed, they would hear from him again. He told me at the same time

that he was sending a Spanish colonel (Vassolo), whom I knew, to make an investigation and report, and in return I promised, if it were necessary, to suspend grinding for two days. I had taken pains to collect enough cane on the railway switches to keep the mills running full at least during the General's visit. So this occurrence ended satisfactorily to all concerned. The investigation was made, and I was exonerated from the charge. I stopped cane-cutting for a day as a matter of policy, but that meant the loss of two days' grinding, and I had to purchase sugars to make up the cargo of a chartered vessel. As I took the opportunity to explain many local abuses to Colonel Vassolo, we stood to gain something, after all, from the affair. But our men from town were still held up by that device of issuing daily passes, so Beal was at a standstill, and we were limited to the hands upon the place.

On January 31st, there was a new difficulty. Weyler was at Cruces and our detachment of troops that had been guarding the batey since November, 1895, were ordered to join their regiment and within the hour were on the march. I at once notified General Lee that we were unprotected except by our own forces. We started work as usual on Monday morning, and I went to town early and saw Colonel Vassolo, who gave me a message from General Prats at Santa Clara that I might continue work. I easily got all restrictions removed and received passes to send the workmen up, including Beal's. I hoped we might receive a small force of

regulars with an officer. On February 1st, orders came for general grinding upon such estates as were properly guarded, but under such conditions most of them could not pay expenses at the current prices.

Weyler's next decree was to the effect that all Government assistance was to be withdrawn and detachments replaced by private guards. I at once notified General Lee. Although the decree seemed impossible to accomplish, we had fulfilled all conditions by February 12th and got our certificate from the alcalde of Cienfuegos. We then proceeded quietly with our work. A few cattle were stolen now and then, or a fence cut, and we had some difficulty in keeping up our tareas, as the field hands were of a poorer class than formerly and we required more men for the same work. In order to complete the Soledad shipments I bought some sugar from neighboring estates. These purchases cost little and turned business into the hands of my friends.

I reported the economic situation to de Lome:

SOLEDAD

MY DEAR MR. DE LOME:

I have been giving some attention to the economic condition and it may interest you to know something of it. Although the grinding did not become general in this jurisdiction until the first of February, the cane fields proved so bad by reason of last year's fires and neglect in cleaning, as well as an almost total absence of new plantings for the past two years, that most of the estates will terminate their crop and stop work at the end of the present month. Prices have been so low

that few will cover their expenses, which, on the other hand, have been unusually heavy. As very many planters are absolutely without resources either to make new plantings or to care for the few fields that are still left, they will have no crop another year, and I can see little chance of their grinding again. The estates must pass into new hands with fresh capital, and this will not be accomplished until peace is restored upon a solid basis and it will require two years after that to bring the fields into production. After the present crop is finished, it is hard to see what will become of the workmen now on the estates. Under the present policy no one is allowed to live in the country, the estates now protecting them by armed forces cannot keep them, there is no employment for them in the towns, and to go there means death to many from starvation or disease. Beef and other food is becoming scarce and expensive, as the country is producing nothing, and imported goods, by reason of the duties, are beyond the reach of the common people. To an unprejudiced observer it seems that the most serious question of all is soon to present itself.

Yours truly

EDWIN F. ATKINS

What trouble we had was with the Spanish guerrilla forces who were made up of the worst classes of the population and stopped at nothing which would serve their ends. On the other hand, I was particularly struck by the respect which was shown us by both officers and men of the regular army in contrast to what we heard about them elsewhere.

There were now some twenty-five thousand troops stretched across the Island just east of Soledad. With the exception of officers and con-

voys, smoke of burning insurgent encampments, etc., we saw little of the war, although from our outlooks we were near enough both to see and hear the firing. We were constantly helping to transport the wounded, who came all the way by ox-cart without any conveniences whatever. It was sad to see the common soldiers. They were worn out with long marches in the sun and had little care. They slept without tents at night, and were often on short rations, but even the wounded were always cheerful and seldom complained.

I could not move without an escort, and was in constant dread of being shot by our own sentries, for I couldn't hear their challenge at a distance and never remembered to halt. Fortunately they all knew my white coat and white horse, and probably couldn't have hit me if they had tried. Our best shots were in the cavalry and not in the forts.

We had a few visitors besides the military: Colonel Acres, correspondent of the London *Times*, who was sending out very fair dispatches; and Alford, Bowen's successor on the New York *World*, who came to Cuba prejudiced in favor of the insurgents, but, after understanding the situation better, became so pro-Spanish that I think his paper did not publish all his letters.

The first of April I went to Trinidad, which had been having more trouble than Soledad with fires every few days and insurgents hanging such country people as they caught out of town. An explosive bomb had been put in the bagasse-burner in

our factory, but fortunately it did little damage. I came down from the estate through the valley on horseback with an escort tendered by Colonel Lara. The road was strewn with dead animals, and every little way Mr. Turner would point out a tree where some one had been hanged recently. The town was full of smallpox and more forlorn than ever. Provisions were scarce and it seemed as if many must surely die of hunger and poverty during the summer. At night the mountains were ablaze where the troops were burning, to drive out the insurgents. There was seldom any fighting, but any unknown person caught outside the town was liable to be shot by either side as a matter of precaution.

All through the winter of 1897 I never relaxed my effort toward bringing about a settlement through autonomy for the Island. On January 17th, Dupuy de Lome had written me a long letter in Spanish in order that I might show it at my discretion 'to those who sympathize with our ideas.'

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

Since your departure from the United States, affairs have progressed and very well in the way you and I have wished for a long time. Up to this time I had only the good will to work for peace, but now, also I have the power to do so. The situation is as follows: As soon as Weyler can show two more provinces are pacified, as he already claims Pinar del Rio, the Spanish Government will issue a very ample and liberal reform decree establishing self-government in Cuba. This decree will be wise. For if the insurrection should continue and is finally put down by armed force, there would be many

discontented people; but if the rebels will lay down their arms and secure peace soon, they can treat with full confidence that Spain is disposed to deal broadly and generously with them, with no reprisals, and to concede everything possible, considering the social conditions of the Island, short of absolute sovereignty. It seems to me that if within a few days the Government gives out the decree, those leaders who are disposed to give themselves up — or perhaps it is better to say lay down their arms — can safely say that with the new policy inaugurated by Spain they call in a future much brighter than the past; and if they do not consider the policy liberal enough, they can say so and I am sure we can arrive at some satisfactory result. This step, taken by Spain to influence public opinion by giving liberal reforms, is sufficient, I think, to save the dignity and self-respect of the rebel leaders and to allow them to take a forward step. If later there is further concession, they can always say to their country people that it is owing to them. All this in regard to the leaders and to public opinion in the Island. As to the inferior officers and the more ignorant of the people, we can very well use the words of Sherman, speaking for himself and McKinley, when he says he thinks the reforms a good solution and that all they desire is to have peace and not to be obliged to meddle in Cuban affairs. I send you a clipping from the *Herald* in which it is said, so that you may show it.

As every one says the revolutionists do not wish to treat with General Weyler, it seems to me that they might talk with me. . . . I am disposed to entertain any proposals they may make either in relation to the future government of the Island or what we should do with the leaders who wish to leave the Island and the compensation some may wish. . . . I should be much obliged for your opinion and if you would do all pos-

sible to put me in contact with any person with whom I could treat. If they confide in you, please send me the proposals or let me know some one here with whom I can confer, for it is necessary to act quickly if the crop is to be made. You know how interested the President and Mr. Olney are in bringing about peace, and I know they will do everything possible to this end.

Yours sincerely

DUPUY DE LOME

In answer I gave the names of certain leaders, who I thought would accept autonomy, but it was not until a month later that I was able to report on Gómez:

I am informed that Gómez will not accept the proposed terms, but can give no particulars; from another source I hear he will not treat with the present commanding general, but I am not able to say if this last is true. I shall hope and believe that with careful management peace can be restored through the lines on which you have worked, but concessions should be very ample to accomplish this, and time is passing.

As the day approached for my departure, I became more and more discouraged over any immediate settlement, for Weyler's course was not calculated to hasten a peaceful solution and little of permanent nature was being accomplished from a military point of view. I had intended to stop in Washington on my way North but at Tampa I received news of the death of my mother and hastened home.

On March 4, 1897, President McKinley was in-

augurated, and through a letter of Mr. Charles Francis Adams I was introduced to the new Administration:

. . . My friend, Mr. E. F. Atkins, has been for many years a planter and large sugar manufacturer in Cuba. I have been brought in very close relations with Mr. Atkins and he is a man of high character, of decided ability, and excellent judgment. Mr. Hanna must remember him well as a member of the Board of Direction of the Union Pacific Railroad Company at the time Mr. Hanna represented in part the Government on that Board. . . . He is more familiarly acquainted with the affairs of Cuba than any American I know of, having resided there and conducted large business operations during certain seasons of the year for a long time past. I know no one whose judgment in regard to Cuban affairs is in my mind entitled to equal consideration. His interests in Cuba being large, he has necessarily been in very close communication with the present Secretary of State, who, I think, has given great weight to his opinions. The correspondence between them has, however, been private, in order that it might not be subject to Congressional or private call, and no trace of it will probably be found in the files of the State Department. I would suggest that you have this letter endorsed and filed away so that it will reach the hands of the Secretary of State whenever the Cabinet of your Administration is made up and its members enter upon their duties. Mr. Atkins will then inevitably be again drawn into close relations with the Department and it seems to me quite desirable that the Secretary should know something of him. Being on the eve of departure for Europe, to be gone for a number of months, I take the liberty of writing thus on this subject, in advance, perhaps, of the proper time.

Through Mr. Adams's letter and letters I wrote to Mark Hanna and to John D. Long, Secretary of the Navy, the way was prepared and I had a long interview with the President and some of his Cabinet, who seemed much interested in learning about the actual condition of affairs upon the Island. Although I endeavored to make my visit private, as it was made especially upon questions of personal business, I did not succeed and was most heartily abused by most of the papers. They had drawn their own conclusions, although none of them succeeded in interviewing me.

Weyler's decree for the concentration of all non-combatants in the towns with its resulting cruelties raised violent protest in the United States. Gómez issued a similar decree, thus throwing the maintenance of a large number of women and children on the Government. It was an undeniable fact that there was dire distress among the reconcentrados and that a large number were dying from disease and hunger.

On May 20th, the Morgan resolution passed the Senate recommending the recognition of the belligerency of the insurgents, and accompanied by much Western oratory of the spread-eagle style and great applause from the galleries. The President, however, took no action except to recommend an appropriation for the relief of destitute American citizens in Cuba. This promised to cover a wide field, as may be guessed from what I have said previously about Cuban-American naturalized citizens.

De Lome was much disturbed by the agitation in Washington because the mistrust in Madrid was sure to be increased thereby and any work of pacification made more difficult.

On August 8th, Canovas Castillo was assassinated by an anarchist and was succeeded by the Minister of War, who continued his policy. On September 29th, the whole Cabinet resigned, and on October 4th, Sagasta, the Liberal leader, became Prime Minister. One of his first acts was to recall Weyler and appoint General Ramón Blanco as Captain-General of Cuba. Blanco arrived at Havana November 1st, and immediately set about putting into effect the reforms, civil and military, advocated by the new Government.

CHAPTER XIX

DESTRUCTION OF THE *MAINE*

I HAD been aware for some time of threats from Cuban insurgents, both in the United States and in Cuba, to the effect that American property on the Island would suffer in case the Administration at Washington did not intervene in the matter of their independence. On December 20, 1897, fires were again set at Soledad, and the following notice was found posted in several places:

LIBERATING ARMY OF CUBA

To Planters and Colonos:

In vain are your efforts, in vain the investment of money in armed forces who consist of men without a country. The defenders of Cuba are not disposed to allow the grinding of any unburned cane!! Fire, destruction!! Long live Free Cuba! Country and Liberty!

In the field, 1897.

(S'd) SEXTO ROQUE

By order of Capt. MANUEL LOPEZ.

Mr. Williams wrote that Sexto Roque and his crowd placed about two dozen candles in different parts of the estate. Some of these candles went out, some were put out, and others started fires that burned a total of two hundred thousand arrobas of cane. I reported this matter as usual to the State Department.

Captain Beal wrote:

Roque was the only man I feared. This ought to be thoroughly ventilated. The first property destroyed in this jurisdiction by rebels was American property. We are now the laughing-stock of Spaniards and it seems to me it is well deserved. Those whom we have befriended are the first to destroy us. I have no news of importance except that Claudio has joined Sexto Roque. Claudio Sarria can't hold a candle to Roque for blackguardism.¹

The first of January, 1898, I left for Cuba, via Washington. I will give the story of that eventful winter of 1898 through extracts from my numerous home letters.

January 13

We spent only one day in Havana. I called upon Dr. Congosto and delivered my letter. He is the Secretary of the Government. I found him very attentive and he took me to see General Blanco, with whom I had a talk. The General is an elderly man of fine appearance. He was dressed in citizen's costume, and unlike Weyler is very courteous and agreeable. I afterwards had a talk with Montoro and Fernandez de Castro. They all feel hopeful over the situation, but the public generally does not feel so because the insurgents hold out. I found no opposition to autonomy anywhere, but a general sentiment now pervades the whole community for annexation. It is particularly strong among the Spaniards. All the better class Cubans fear independence. I had a long talk with General Lee late at night, and also a long interview with Canalejas at his room in

¹ Sexto Roque is now one of my respected neighbors, and holds a civil office.

the hotel. I think this man has a better understanding of the situation than any one I have ever met. He spoke with surprising frankness. . . . Reaching Cienfuegos early Monday morning, we heard of Mr. George Fowler's death the day previous and so passed the day in town to attend the funeral. Poor man, the troubles were too much for him. I shall miss him very much, as I have known him since I was Teddy's age, and he was always very kind.

It is quiet here at present, and what insurgents there are seem to be scattered in small bands; they are burning some, but so far the damage has not been great.

January 15

At this moment I hear four peaceful citizens have just been found hanging on a tree not far away (the work of patriots). These things attract little attention now, but serve to keep us on the alert, and we have a man with a gun at every door of our factory and dwelling-house day and night on the lookout for strangers.

January 20

We seem to find laborers enough for our work, and the sick are improving. . . . A little meat with their food does them most good, but the cost is so high we cannot give them very much of it. All the cattle have to be imported now and although free of duty they cost three times what they did formerly. . . . We have sixty-five men, Government troops, between the batey and surrounding forts, besides seventy-seven of our own, mostly guards for the fields . . . far less than last year, when we had to take care of ourselves entirely.

January 26

On the night of the 24th a party of insurgents blew up the masonry foundation wall of the high railroad

bridge near Factoria, about two and a half miles from the bately. Nothing was known of it until the morning when the first train went out with the field hands about 5.30. There were probably about seventy men on the cars besides the train crew, and as many more on the second train following. The track seemed all right, but when the first train reached the bridge one section went down, and with it the locomotive and one car. Five men were badly injured, crushed under the cars, and many more hurt; the engineer and fireman jumped to the stream below and saved their lives; others fell on the rocks and broke bones. I did not know of it until I left my room a little before seven and then rode down as soon as I could get my horse and guards. It was a distressing sight. Mr. Williams was on the spot with wrecking crew and a gang of carpenters clearing the track, and I took four of the worst injured on the steamer at once and carried them to the Cienfuegos hospital. I wish that the sympathizers North could have seen the sight, and realized that this is what the insurgents call warfare. They took good care to run to some safe place and nothing was seen of them, but I hope to find out who they were. . . . There has been some shooting back of us this afternoon, but nothing of any consequence. I hear some insurgents are passing through, but they cannot stay long, as there is nothing to eat. Even the buzzards are starving and eat the cotton waste out of the boxes of the railroad cars so that our cars often have hot boxes for want of grease.

Several insurgents claimed the honor of this act, hoping for promotion, but I soon found out the destruction of our bridge was the direct result of the *S. T. Smith* expedition. Cepero, a member of the expedition, was captured at Ranchuelo on Janu-

ary 17, 1898. He was soon released owing to his American citizenship papers. I obtained a statement made by him of his connection with the expedition of the *Donna T. Briggs* sent out by the Cuban Junta:

We left New York on August 14, 1897, and went to the Bahamas, where we were joined by the steamer *Summers T. Smith*, Captain Dunn. The *Smith* took men and arms from the *Briggs* and landed them near Cape Antonio, Province of Pinar del Rio, returning to the *Briggs*. She again took men and arms, landing near Jaruco Province of Havana; again returning, she took a third lot of men and arms, and landed them at mouth of Arimao River, near Cienfuegos, Province of Santa Clara. Emilio Nuñez was in charge of the general expedition. Jack O'Brien, known as 'Dynamite Johnny,' had charge of landing. I landed with some twenty men at Arimao River. I held no commission; this party was commanded by one Fernando Mendez of Key West; we landed arms and ammunition, including dynamite. Was present at the meeting of Mendez and Rego and heard the conversation.¹ Mendez told Rego he brought orders not to allow the crop to be made, and showed dynamite cartridges for the destruction of Soledad. While in New York was at office of the Junta, and heard Estrada Palma tell Julio Sanguilly that Mr. Atkins was considered a dangerous enemy of their cause. We landed on or about September 15, 1897.

I immediately sent a cable to Washington, also to our lawyer in New York to have arrested the members of the Cuban Junta there, who I knew had

¹ Rego was in command of a party who took charge of the ammunition.

issued orders to blow up Soledad. These orders I had obtained through the American Consul at Cienfuegos from a Chilean who had been sent out with the expedition. The arrest in New York was not made, owing to some legal complications. It was, however, reported to Horatio Rubens, counsel for the Junta, whom I met some years afterwards while dining with General Wood at the Palace in Havana. Rubens remembered the case perfectly, and told me that during the insurrection he crossed my trail in every direction, particularly in Washington. We afterwards became firm friends.

January 30

There is great destitution here as well as sickness. It is hard to tell what to do for these people. At Guaos there are over a thousand; they do not know how to help themselves; they drain into and wash their clothes in the brook, and use the same brook for water supply. The store-keeper there had planted a lot of tobacco and many of the women and children were caring for it under the protection of the fort. It was light work, and they were earning their food at least in this way. A short time ago, some insurgents crept up in the night and quietly destroyed the plants by cutting them off with their machetes; not a shot was fired.

Mr. Williams and I are trying to do something to assist the people. There are many who are coming here for food, who have brothers and relatives who are working on the place, or who are able to work, and some of the women are not of such character as to deserve or require assistance; so we ask a ticket signed by the *alcalde* before aiding them, as they have neither priest nor doctor.

I am going to have a resident doctor here who can assist. It is little use to send clothing, as woolen is not used here, and cannot be washed; flour is little good, as they do not know how to bake bread. The most practical way of helping is to send money to be used for the purchase of rice, gавancas, and such cheap food; also to buy cheap linen to be made up by the women, and if possible to give them a little fresh beef twice a week. I would give no money to them directly. We have been giving out such things for some time past, but of course in a very limited way. If peace is not restored this winter, the mortality after next June will be very great. A very little fresh beef had an immediate effect upon the laborers here after they came to work with us when grinding began; and this is more needed than medicine.

It seems to be the plan of the insurgents to increase the destitution of these poor people by preventing any employment for them, or any support. The Junta in New York discourages, rather than encourages, contributions for the sufferers here, while they are doing everything possible to prevent peace.

February 6

The other day I rode over to Guaos and went about the huts of the reconcentrados there with the alcalde. To one who is not accustomed to the manner of living of these country people, it would seem that they were in the worst possible condition, yet much of it is what they are accustomed to in their usual lives. Palm huts, a dirt floor and smoky fire inside; the difference is that being so many together brings sickness, and there has been no means of obtaining food. I looked up a lot of widows with big families of small children with more to come, and told the alcalde to give them papers recommending them as needy people and we would give

them provisions once a week, such as rice, beans, salt, jerked beef, etc., as we have been doing for many months past. The people all had some kind of clothing, and all able-bodied men can find work on the estate. The whole population of one thousand people seem to live in some way from this estate; the men work here, many of the women find washing to do, and others get some of the money which circulates in this way, while others who cannot earn anything are fed here. The sickness is not so bad as it was at one time, and fortunately there is no smallpox yet. I am going to try to have some of them vaccinated. There is no priest, no doctor, or any medicine in the place. The death-rate has been terrible, but apparently the *birth-rate* will soon make up the losses. Many of the families had six and eight children each; one man working for Captain Beal for eighteen dollars per month had a wife and seven children, and he has lost two besides.

February 13

We have arranged for a resident doctor here, Dr. Landa, a man thirty-six years old, who has had considerable experience and who is highly recommended by Dr. Perna. He will practise in the vicinity as well as here. They have already the first vaccine I sent to Cienfuegos and are using it. It means Brooks bought one thousand points with my donation. They hope to control the smallpox, which, although it got a good start, is not increasing.

I must leave Soledad now to take up the more important events in Havana. In January there was some rioting in Havana which, although a small matter in itself, was to have far-reaching results. The rioting was simply an attack on newspaper



CUBAN PALM HUT



offices by some Spanish army officers in revenge for some articles reflecting upon the conduct of the army. Sparks, who witnessed the whole thing, said the rioters were unarmed and confined themselves to smashing up the office furniture. It was over in an hour or so. There was no demonstration against Americans. On January 24th, against the advice of Fitzhugh Lee, the cruiser *Maine* was sent to Havana. The Spanish Government officially expressed pleasure at having a friendly visit from an American ship and arranged to have the cruiser *Viscaya* pay a return visit to New York. The arrival of the *Maine* in Havana did not cause the least excitement. De Lome had not believed it necessary or wise to send the *Maine* to Havana, but de Lome's career as a diplomat was nearing an end.

On February 9, 1898, Hearst's New York *Journal* printed in full a letter which de Lome had written in December to Canalejas, editor of the Madrid *Heraldo*, who had been sent unofficially to the United States and Cuba to treat with the rebels. This letter somehow fell into the hands of the Junta, and contained such outrageous criticism of McKinley, from a diplomatic point of view, that de Lome immediately resigned. The best people in Cuba, Spaniards and Cubans, regretted his loss. I feared that Cuba had lost her very best friend in de Lome and Spain her best diplomat.

On February 15th, at twenty minutes before ten in the evening, the *Maine* was destroyed by an explosion.

February 17

Was not the disaster to the *Maine* terrible? I cannot understand it at all. My first thought was of work of insurgents to cause trouble between the Governments, but this seems improbable for want of opportunity, unless some dynamite was shoved in with coal at Key West, and this could hardly have caused such a disaster. It is more likely to be from some purely accidental cause which may never be known. I can imagine there was great excitement North.

I see Mr. Bygrave is taking contributions for the Cubans. I suppose the money will go to Miss Barton and I hope she will make good use of it. It is very hard to separate the worthy from others. We found one of the local guerrillas was sending his wife here for food, while he himself was getting wages. For this reason I will help only those who are recommended by the alcalde or by some responsible person who knows about them.

February 19

Insurgents burned the building on Schmidt's place at Trinidad, one of the three factories left in the valley, and in full view of our place. Schmidt was commonly thought to be very friendly to the Cause, but they treated him as they treat all of their friends. The places here which have suffered most are those of the Terrys and, two days ago, a colonia of Caracas was burned by them belonging to Cabrera, the insurgent leader, who married a sister of Mrs. Pancho Terry.

February 26

The *Maine* disaster did not cause near the excitement here that it did North, and the universal sorrow manifested should strengthen relations were it not for certain d——d fools in Congress and our yellow journals which are tools of the New York Junta.

I was at Guaos yesterday. The people there seem to be in better condition owing, no doubt, to the money that circulates there from this estate. I suppose the welfare of at least two thousand people is dependent upon our being able to keep this place running, and I *mean* to do it. As soon as the crop is finished we will put gangs into the fields, weeding and planting, and keep the population employed as far as possible. By insurgent decree such work is prohibited and punishable by death, but without employment the people will die anyway. . . . I am glad to say our new doctor came yesterday. I liked his appearance very much. We shall build a small house for his family later. He brought a brother with him who is an apothecary and will open a shop here properly supplied with all medicines, which he will sell for his own account, we furnishing the building and house rent free; and we allow the doctor six hundred dollars per year. He is to attend such employees as cannot pay free; also accident cases. The families will pay him a small sum per month plus one dollar per visit, which will give him a fair salary; and for the rest he will depend upon outside calls, as there is no other doctor nearer than Cienfuegos. I believe it a good arrangement for all and one I would have made before had I found the right man.

March 7

A message has just gone over our wires, 9 P.M., telling of a fight at Cumanayagua to-day. There was one killed on each side, I believe, and several wounded; also one prisoner. Probably the wounded and prisoner will be sent to us to-morrow. I hear that Sexto Roque and his gang of patriots were seen here yesterday. I think they were after our ploughing oxen, but the guards frightened them off . . . so far we have not lost an ox or a life in the fields.

March 10

Night before last several fires broke out at Captain Beal's, set, we suppose, by the patriot, Sexto Roque, who wants money. We sent up our armored car full of soldiers to protect the men who went out and worked hard to get the fires under control. Little real damage was done, and the cane will all be out to-day.

March 13

Yesterday my 'widows,' as they are called here, were down for their weekly rations. They all come together as far as the sentry at the gate of the batey, where they are admitted four at a time. Many had their children with them. Our doctor very kindly offered to treat my widows and orphans free, for which they seemed very grateful, and all took advantage of the offer on the spot, I furnishing medicines. The old judge, now boss of our freight handlers, to whom we have entrusted the distribution of supplies, knows most of the people at Guaos and says many of the people whom I have taken in charge were formerly quite well off. They were all neatly dressed and seem respectable as well as respectful people. There are some thirty on our list besides a dozen or so of old negroes who are all at Caunao and come weekly to be fed. The rations we give consist of rice, jerked beef, beans, and salt; not Delmonico fare, but hearty and what they can cook and are used to.

Senator Proctor and Clara Barton spent one night in Cienfuegos last week. They saw no one but the Consul, who did not seem charmed with Miss Barton. He says she is a feeble old woman without an idea of the situation and no wish to know. The subscription for relief of sufferers was started in Washington in January, or rather in December; nothing has yet been sent to Cienfuegos. I guess there is too much red tape and too little help.

I was to hear more of this visit of Senator Proctor to Cienfuegos.

March 15

Matters are looking mixed, are they not? I find no desire for war in any but insurgent quarters here, and these are doing everything to bring it about. Should they unfortunately be successful, they will, I think, be greatly disappointed as to the final result. I feel that I should be getting nearer to where I can get a more accurate view of the present situation, and as we hope to finish by end of this month I shall go on to Havana in the course of a week or ten days and then continue North.

March 17

The night before last we heard firing behind us and yesterday we heard that the patriot Sexto Roque had fallen into an ambushade of guerrillas while crossing the river. One of the patriots was killed and another was wounded. As the insurgents opened fire, the guerrillas ran to the fort near by, except one who hid in the river all night, with just his head out of water and under the grass. As the other men from the fort missed him and called for him, the rebels knew he was around somewhere and spent the night looking for him without success. A few days ago three patriot leaders, Alvarez, Victor Nuñez, and one more, were killed by another insurgent leader, Bermudez, because they were about to surrender. Alvarez was a murderer before the war and had been a bandit. He was now a brigadier-general, as, I believe, was also Bermudez, whose chief had quite a reputation as a bandit before the insurrection and is now a leader of some renown.

March 20

One more patriot has fallen in the Cause, this time a brother of Sexto Roque and member of his band. He

was shot by Guardias Civiles near Caunao last night. I hear that Rafael Cabrera died recently. He had been sent east from here. The stories published in our Northern papers recently are astonishing, and many have no foundation of truth whatever. . . . The situation from your point of view is certainly disturbing. Here there is no excitement, neither in Havana as far as I can learn.

March 24

We are looking for the report about the *Maine*. I hope it will hold off now until I get to Havana. Curiously enough, the Spaniards pay little attention to the matter, while the Cubans seem thoroughly frightened by the possibility of war. . . . Presentados say that the insurgents are split between autonomy and independence, but are held together now by hopes of trouble between Spain and the United States, as well as by fear of being shot or hanged by their own people. This is what is called 'esprit de corps.'

CHAPTER XX

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

MATTERS seemed in such critical condition that I felt it my duty to stop in Washington on my way North and do what little I could to help toward some peaceful settlement. The day before I sailed from Havana I had spent most of the afternoon at the Palace, where I met the entire Cabinet by invitation, and by request of General Blanco. I had a long private conference with him in the evening, so for the moment I could claim to be well informed. The story of those days in Washington is told in letters to Mrs. Atkins:

April 3

This is an anxious day and to-morrow will show the feeling for peace or war. All day yesterday I was busy with the President, Secretaries of State and Navy, and with many leading Senators. I talked as I never talked before, feeling that what I said might possibly turn the scales. Mr. Ketch, of the Cuban Relief Committee, was with me and made an excellent impression; he endorsed all I said. We both made a statement for publication, which is being held back for some reason, and newspaper men do not know that I am here. It has been suggested that I go before the Senate Committee to-morrow, but this I will endeavor to avoid if possible. The better element in Congress is gaining in strength, and I hope they will leave the

matter with the President, but it is a critical moment. I have told Secretary Long that I would remain here until the crisis is past.

April 4

Every one is waiting for the President's Message and speculating upon what it may be. I have my ideas like others, but do not express them. This morning I was introduced to Speaker Reed by one who told him that I held the right views on the Cuban question. Reed smiled as he shook hands and said: 'Well, what is the *use* of being right when everybody else is wrong?' I think he felt a sympathy with me. I feel anxious about our people in Cuba, as I don't know what to do in case of war. I have a feeling, however, that there will be no war. People are sending telegrams from all over the country telling their Representatives to stand by the President for peace. I received a response from Morgan Jones, just now, saying he and his friends were at work in Texas. I have just had a long talk with O'Brien, of the *Transcript*, but not for publication. It is probable the Message will not be sent in before Wednesday; every day is a gain on the side of peace.

April 10

There is a good deal of excitement here to-night in anticipation of the President's Message to-morrow. No one knows just what may happen; most of them expect war, but I have strong hopes that it will be averted. My acquaintances here seem to have the impression that I know just what is going to happen, and could tell if I would. Probably this idea is fostered by my not seeking any information through usual channels, and staying quietly in the hotel instead of rushing from place to place in cabs as others are doing. . . . Last

night I was called out of bed to receive some news and I have managed to keep posted fairly well so far; still, I feel very anxious owing to the attitude of Congress, and I know the gravity of the situation.

April 11

The Message is as I expected, and to me satisfactory; if Congress will leave the matter with the President, I think there will be no war, and that most liberal autonomy will result, supported by the best classes of people in Cuba. If Congress declares for war, there will be annexation as the result. I do not think now that there will be independence under the New York Junta. I look for discussion and delay in Congress, with final support of the Administration, but await the developments to-morrow with interest and anxiety.

April 12

There is a Congressman from the Wild West dictating a speech on Cuba here, which is distracting; I am of a mind to ask him to let me dictate for him; I know I could do it better. I doubt if he knows where Cuba is. Lee arrived this afternoon and I had a short chat with him; he went at once before the Committee, and I am rather uneasy about results. He does not favor recognition of independence, but I think would like prompt intervention.

On April 20, 1898, President McKinley signed the Act passed by Congress which meant war with Spain; it recognized the independence of Cuba; demanded that Spain should immediately relinquish her authority and withdraw her army and navy; authorized the President to employ the forces of the United States to carry the resolutions into

effect, and to ensure the pacification of the Island; upon which its sovereignty would be vested in its people. The substance of this document was cabled to our Minister at Madrid, and Spain was given three days to comply with its demands. Within that time the Spanish Minister at Washington asked for his passports; and Spain notified our Minister that diplomatic relations between the Governments were at an end.

During my stay in Washington Redfield Proctor, of Vermont, on the floor of the Senate had referred to me and to that visit which he made to Cienfuegos with Miss Barton, as follows:

... The Senator from West Virginia (Mr. Elkins) challenged my statement in regard to the strength of the insurgent army, and unkindest cut of all, he challenged it on the strength of what Mr. Atkins, of Boston, said. In regard to Mr. Atkins, I will refer any Senators who wish to enquire as to him to the junior Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. Lodge) who knows him well. ... I went to Cienfuegos, near which Mr. Atkins's plantation is situated. I saw before I got there, and I learned from various sources after I reached that city, that Mr. Atkins had had special favors from the Spanish Government. It was evident, even in going along in the cars, that there was a much larger force guarding his mills than those in other sections. His sugar mills, and others in his vicinity, were running, although all the way from there to Havana there was hardly one. He had had the opportunity to run his mills while others were destroyed. I learned also, to speak plainly, that Mr. Atkins had our Consul, Mr. McGarr, at Cienfuegos, in his pocket. ... I was told

that Mr. Atkins was very generous with certain stimulating beverages which had a lubricating effect upon the Consul's mind and tongue. . . . Mr. McGarr told me that Mr. Atkins was the finest man in the world; he could not say too much for him. I then asked him about the condition of the reconcentrados and the deaths. He told me that the statements were greatly exaggerated, and he also said, 'This trouble would have been ended long ago if it had not been for the United States.' . . . He went on to say that they [the reconcentrados] were in very bad condition when they were driven in. They had been out in the swamps and were half starved.

April 19th, I answered through a press interview:

I am averse to any newspaper controversy, but I cannot very well overlook Senator Proctor's references to me in his speech. One of his statements was that as he approached Cienfuegos by rail it was evident, even to one passing in the cars, that there was a much larger force guarding my mills than those in other sections. The answer to this is that the nearest point on the railway over which Mr. Proctor passed is fifteen miles from my mills, and that an intervening range of hills cuts off the view. Mr. Proctor stated further that while in Cienfuegos he ascertained that I enjoyed special favors from the Spanish Government. This I deny positively. I have received no favors from the Spanish Government other than such as are the right of every American citizen in Spanish territory, under treaty and international obligations.

To return to my difficulties in Cuba. I was anxious to get my people in Cuba away and wrote Secretary Day:

BOSTON, *April 21*, 1898

MY DEAR SECRETARY DAY:

Three Americans are upon our estate at Trinidad, where the British steamer *Garonne* is loading sugars at Casilda, and the steamer is then to proceed to Cienfuegos to complete her cargo. It is probable that the steamer *Garonne* will bring the Americans above referred to together with some British employees of mine at Cienfuegos, including women and children. I would respectfully suggest that the Navy Department be informed. My British manager of the Soledad Estate writes that he does not fear personal danger in event of war, but that in case of blockade they would soon have to face a condition of starvation. In connection with this I would beg to call your attention to the fact that women and children among the reconcentrados whom I have been caring for in the vicinity of my estate would, in case of blockade and cutting-off of supplies, be immediately in a state of starvation, and that under such conditions I should be powerless to save them without prompt assistance from this Government.

Yours truly

EDWIN F. ATKINS

Mr. Williams and his family did finally leave Cuba at this time, and Mr. L. F. Hughes, the assistant manager, was in charge. Mr. Williams did not return, and in due time Mr. Hughes became manager.

Many people in Cienfuegos were also anxious to get away from the Island. On May 5th at the request of George Fowler's son, British Consular Agent, I procured a neutral steamer to take some passengers to Jamaica. Over three hundred terri-

fied people flocked on board, filling the little steamer to overflowing. The boat finally sailed with its heavy load and most of the passengers remained in Jamaica till the trouble was over.

BOSTON, *June 6, 1898*

MY DEAR SECRETARY DAY:

The Government has issued an order confiscating all horses, with the exception of those belonging to foreign residents who are not Americans, but allowed my assistant manager to retain the horses for our mounted police; and, through the courtesy of the commanding officer, a few of our best horses were returned to him for use on the estate. He also writes that some twelve yoke of oxen had been taken for Government use, but that a receipt had been delivered for the same, with promises to return them later. He further states that he had sufficient provisions for the time being, for the limited number of men now employed.

I write you these particulars, as they seem to show that the better class of Spanish officials do not show a disposition, up to the present time, to persecute individual American citizens in their territory who are victims of unfortunate circumstances.

I beg to suggest to you that the insurgents might be given to understand by this Government that they are expected to respect the property of American citizens in Cuba, for our greatest danger seems to be from that source.

Yours truly

EDWIN F. ATKINS

On June 14th I wrote Mr. Robert L. O'Brien, then Washington correspondent of the *Boston Transcript*:

MY DEAR MR. O'BRIEN:

It looks a little now as if the war might not last as long as I had feared: for before its beginning I had not calculated upon the Spanish fleet being caught in such a fix. The capture of Santiago, with the destruction of the fleet, together with the capture of Puerto Rico, should not be very difficult, and ought to put a new aspect upon affairs at Madrid. Possibly the Cuban problem may, after all, be settled without the necessity of taking Havana by force, which would certainly be a great blessing both to this country and to Spain.

After getting possession of Cuba, our troubles will begin. Personally I have little doubt that the population will divide up into two parties, one composed of the property-owners of all classes, the other of the present insurgent forces and the black population; one demanding annexation, the other independence; and I am interested in following the drift of opinion in Washington regarding our future obligations to Cuba.

With an irresponsible independent government there, and high tariff barriers established both in Cuba and this country, there would be little inducement for new capital to go into the Island either from this country or from Europe; and without fresh capital the Island would be helpless to recover from the effects of the war, and the value of its commerce to this country *nil*.

Yours truly

EDWIN F. ATKINS

The Peace Protocol was signed on August 12, 1898. From the signing of the Protocol to the final signing of the Peace Treaty on December 10th, Cuba was in a state of chaos. There was urgent need of increasing the food supply and at the same

time saving the working oxen for industry. I cabled and wrote the State Department on this subject, and the United States Government carried this matter through with the greatest expedition. Beef, cattle, and other food supplies intended for the relief of the starving inhabitants of the Island were admitted free of duty, subject to the discretion of the commanding officer of the United States forces at the port of entry, and he was responsible for the gratuitous distribution of these supplies.

As Special Commissioner of the United States, the Honorable Robert P. Porter was sent by President McKinley to Cuba to report on its industrial, commercial, and financial condition, and at his request I had the pleasure of giving Mr. Porter some assistance.

On November 1st, I sent Mr. Porter extracts from a letter on conditions in Cuba written me by Mr. Cabada:

Mr. Porter and most people in the United States will naturally infer that the financial troubles of planters have been caused by the insurrection. We well know what the conditions were prior to the war; the enormous debts piled up by abuse of credit and reckless expansion of the centrals; after absorbing all available in the community, they had recourse to usurers. There are thousands of families ruined and in dire want, whose means have been swallowed up by well-known centrals. There are owners of mortgaged properties all around us who get a good living from them and have not paid a cent of interest in the past three years. Meanwhile there is demoralization and

corruption in every branch of administration exceeding anything in the history of Cuba. It is so, I am assured, from the foot of the ladder to the top; it is the common talk and no one denies it. It seems to be the last grab, and they stop at nothing to fill their pockets. Custom-house smuggling, I am told, prospers, even with reduced imports. . . . The delay of the United States in taking control works very badly for all interests. There is very little semblance of any responsible government, and no security whatever in the country. The Spanish guerrillas have been disbanded; some have been paid partially and others not at all. They have taken to marauding, and in small bands take from the poor country people whatever they have; they slaughter all cattle they find, quite close up to the town and send this meat to market with perfect impunity. There is no redress whatever; it seems a long time to wait for the arrival of the American authorities.

Since September I had been urging upon the President, the Secretary of War, and the State Department, both by letter and interviews, the necessity of occupying the Island and taking over the customs as soon as possible, in order that trade might be started. But the Cienfuegos Custom-House was not taken over by our Government until the first of the year; consequently the old Spanish ratio was in force and we could not get our free cattle and supplies for the hungry. Nevertheless, the Cienfuegos district had come through the war probably better than any other on the Island.

Mr. Walter Beal wrote me from Cienfuegos where he had gone to assist Mr. Cacicedo in conferences with the military officers:

September 12, 1898

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

The Spaniards to a man want only annexation, and unless this is obtained, or the Island is to remain under control of the United States, they will give up their business and return to Spain. Until American troops are in possession of Cienfuegos, none of the merchants here will attempt to bring in any goods, as they fear a raid from the insurgents if the latter are permitted to enter the city with arms. . . . I think it would be policy on the part of our Government to pay off the Cuban army and disband it, obliging each man to return to his home; and in this way they would be in condition to start up their farms and not be roving about stealing and giving trouble.

The troops are still concentrated in and near this city, anxious to return to Spain. I hear the guerrillas have not been paid for six months. Will our Government have to assist them as well as the insurgents? The insurgents in camp near here are being fed by Cienfuegos people, but how long this contribution can continue is a question. . . . I understand that there is extreme suffering among the insurgents coming in from the hills, and particularly severe with the women and children. . . . Provisions should be sent to Cienfuegos and distributed at the earliest opportunity, and I imagine Mr. Porter has already taken steps in this direction.

Yours very truly

W. G. BEAL

*From P. M. Beal**October 4, 1898*

MY DEAR MR. ATKINS:

I went over to the insurgent camp at Lagunillas this morning. Anastacio (Ramírez) is in command there

and has a force of 440 infantry, of which 90 garrison Lagunillas. They were on rather short allowance and I presented them with an order on Cacicedo for a small invoice of provisions. Their order and discipline is admirable; they have taken a firm stand on the side of good order and I believe they will enforce it. . . . It is rather a curious turn of affairs! At Lagunillas, the insurgent flag is flying over the fort San Luis de Toloso built by Don Luis Ramos Yzquierdo, etc. Yzquierdo's guerrillas passing Lagunillas stop there to take their morning coffee and touch their hats in salute to the despised ragged garrison; but all are treated properly, and in any of the camps the most delicate and refined ladies can go anywhere without being offended by an indecent expression; and their camps are scrupulously clean.

October 19

At this moment an insurgent force from Ojo de Agua passed through the batey en route to Los Guaos after rations. They stopped in front of the house and asked permission to pass; they belonged to Piniero's command, who had always been very friendly to us. It had been raining all night and was still raining hard; as they were wet to the skin, I invited them to wait a moment and I sent the boy to give them a few cigars. To the officer in charge I made a remark on the miserable life they were living, to which he answered: 'God grant that the Americans will soon take possession of the Government and let us go home and do something different.' I enquired if that was the general desire of their people here, and he said it was. This was a fine specimen of a white Cuban, a man apparently of few words and fairly intelligent.

Sexto Roque was on the side of law and order, and was one of the commanders at Los Guaos. I invited

Sexto to breakfast with me! I had an object in it, namely, Claudio.

Have no further fear from Claudio. That fellow has been disgraced and hounded until life has become unbearable, and he is talking about leaving his ungrateful patria for Mexico. He had a very narrow escape; Esquerre fully intended to have put an end to him, but meddlesome women from Cienfuegos succeeded in getting him reprieved. The alcalde from Ojo de Agua told me that he was present when Esquerre ordered out his whole camp of cavalry and infantry and formed them in a hollow square into which Claudio was brought decorated with the insignia of his rank, that of captain. Esquerre then had read the charges which had been brought against him, together with the finding of the court. Then an officer stepped out and tore off the insignia of rank and Claudio was reduced from the high cockalorum of captain in the army of libertadores to just a common everyday nigger soldier. But the worst was yet to come. Esquerre made a speech; Esquerre is a man of few words, but when he is angry, his words are like so many daggers, and they hurt! After he got through, Claudio was looked upon as an outcast by his former companions and the miserable cur slunk away like a mangy cur to some lonely corner. Finally, when he realized that the Soledad charge had become serious and that he was to be brought before Esquerre, he became alarmed and managed to get away to Cienfuegos, and from there intended to leave the Island.

Yours very truly

P. M. BEAL

On January 1, 1899, Major-General John R. Brooke, as Military Governor of the Island, accepted the surrender of Havana from General

Jiminez Castellanos. Mr. Porter gave me a letter to General Brooke and also to the Collector of Customs in Cienfuegos. On my arrival in Havana I had several conferences, and one night at dinner was joined by Mr. Springer, the former Vice-Consul, and by Captain Sigsbee. While we were talking, a waiter brought a bottle of champagne and filled my glass. When I asked who sent it, he said, 'General Julio Sanguilly.' Sanguilly was dressed in white with brass buttons and was quite a striking figure. He was one of the patriots who, in turn, sold out both sides; now, I suppose, he thought it might be advantageous to be on good terms with me.

General John C. Bates was the Commander of Santa Clara Province, and at Cienfuegos I conferred with him and also the collector. General Bates introduced me to General Emilio Nuñez, who had commanded the expedition to blow us up the previous year. It was amusing to see the mingling of American and Spanish troops, who seemed on the most friendly terms. I was sorry that General Bates had been ordered to make his headquarters at Santa Clara, a small inland town, as Cienfuegos, the business centre and port, was the place for him. Nevertheless, I found him occupying the Palace, which General Aguirre had vacated for him. Soon after I arrived, I called on General Aguirre, who was staying with Mr. Cacicedo, and I really pitied him. He was an old man with white hair, very dignified, and with very courtly manners. When I expressed my appreciation of the way he

treated us'during the war, he said it was no more than his duty; that as a soldier and a gentleman he waged war against the American Nation, not against individuals. He said no individual could be charged with responsibility for the war, which came from circumstances originating fifty years ago. He did not complain, but wanted to get back to Spain as soon as he had fulfilled his duties. When I left, he accompanied me to the door, and in the presence of two of his staff officers bowed me out with a grace that we so seldom see. As the door closed, I felt that I had reached the end of a chapter in the history of Cuba; and that I had parted with the last representative of Spanish chivalry on this side of the Atlantic. I turned to meet Mr. Simonds, of Belmont, who was awaiting me at the door, and who recalled me to the new order of things under the American flag.

CHAPTER XXI

AMERICAN OCCUPATION

WE started grinding at Soledad on January 8, 1899, with an American flag floating from a staff in the batey and another one over the house. Mr. Hughes was doing extremely well as manager. He was both strict and considerate, and was very popular everywhere. Mr. Hughes's brother was now on the estate. He was breaking in well and was an excellent accountant. We had a very competent new man, Dunbar, in charge of Rosario. Besides the new men we had many improvements in the house, on the batey, and on the colonias. We planted some trees and flowers about the buildings, and graded the roads and yards. It had been impossible to keep the place clean while Spanish troops were coming and going and feeding their horses and oxen on the batey.

SOLEDAD, *January*, 1899

DEAR KATE:

There does not seem much to say, it is so quiet compared with past years, so quiet it is almost dull. No fires, no sudden alarms calling out the guards, no unexpected arrival of Spanish officers to breakfast; no Government orders to stop work or start work; no sick and wounded soldiers: just the way of peace. The population is generally going to work, except the white Cubans. These cannot understand that liberty and work are in any way related. My own gangs, which

include Spaniards, negroes, and Chinamen, contain very few native whites.

A man who has been in Santiago since the fight says the insurgents there are growing restive and wish the American troops withdrawn. He looks for trouble with them, but says it won't last long. I think the Cubans will be slow in going to work as long as they are fed. Here we are taking care of a lot of helpless people and have lots of demands from others. To the men we offer a job, which generally sends them off in a hurry. The Government has done nothing yet in this part of the Island. The pure blacks seem to be falling into line here as a rule. We have laborers enough, but they are weak yet and there is a good deal of fever among them. Eight of our fourteen carpenters are now sick and it is hard enough to get necessary jobs done.

Yours affectionately

NED

A few days after my arrival at Soledad, General Bates sent for Mr. Ponvert and me. He told us the insurgents felt that the private guards on the estates should be disbanded; but at my suggestion he consented to send Captain William G. Wright of his staff to Soledad to look into conditions before issuing any orders. I chose Captain Wright because I had been impressed with his ability, and considered him one of Bates's most intelligent aides. He belonged to the regular army, and had seen service in the Indian country. When he came out to the estate, we spent five hours in the saddle; and I took him all over Soledad and to Guaos and Arimao. At both these places we found the in-

surgents in control under negro officers, who were carefully questioned by the Captain with my help as interpreter. They said they were guarding the towns and keeping order; that they collected forty cents from each person daily to feed their men, taxes payable every day in cash. Wright expressed great surprise at the extent of our investment, and we heard no more about the disbanding of our guards. I also hoped a small detachment of troops would be sent to us within a few days.

I was besieged whenever I went to town by people who begged me to use my supposed influence to help them or their friends to some office. I usually got rid of them by saying that although I would not recommend them I would, if asked, tell what I knew of them — the last thing that most of them would have wished.

It seemed as if every one in the Province who wanted anything came to me for it — officers, planters, and merchants of all classes. If a man wanted an appointment, he came to me, and if another failed to get one, he blamed me, although I declined from the first to recommend any one for office. I remember one day, while trying to write my home letter, the Alcalde de Ojo de Agua came asking for provisions from the Government for his poor and sick; an officer called me on the telephone asking how he could get to a town fifty miles from Soledad; a petition arrived from the citizens of Trinidad which they wished me to forward to the Secretary of War in Washington; and a troop of

cavalry asked permission to camp for a couple of days just because they liked the place and the people. Such things as these kept me pretty busy in addition to my own work.

SOLEDAD, *January 20, 1899*

DEAR KATE:

The town is very dirty. The wharves are full of Spanish troops; Torriente's wharf has two regiments, one of them Civil Guards. These were to leave to-day. I said good-bye to their Colonel Mijares yesterday, telling him I was sorry to have him go. He said he was sorry, also, to leave under such circumstances, after twenty years' service in Cuba. Mijares has been a good friend to me in the past and I shall miss him. The American officers are quartered at the Government house on the Plaza, while the Spanish officers frequent the Casino Español a few doors beyond. Troops of both nations guard the block. I am made welcome at both places, but am the only American who enters the club house. It seems strange to go from one to the other and change languages when I do so. The best of feeling prevails among the officers and men, but they cannot speak with each other. Here and there you see some one in Cuban uniform, but they are only recognized as individuals and do not affiliate with either side. There are military band concerts in the Plaza, and once I saw an American soldier walking about with half a dozen children hanging about him. I notice negroes come into the Plaza now, which was never allowed before. The Spanish and American soldiers are swapping decorations. One Spaniard was taken by an American button, which he supposed to be a decoration, and putting it on he walked off well satisfied. It had the inscription, 'Remember the *Maine*, to Hell with Spain.' You can imagine what the Spanish officers said.

One of the staff officers telephoned me this afternoon that he would send me fifteen men on Monday, who will go into camp near the batey. They will answer our purpose and I hope to further reduce our force by the end of this month.

January 23

We are handling some provisions to-day sent by the Red Cross or Government for Cumanayagua and Ojo de Agua. I furnish the transportation as far as our railway can take them. I just called up one of my Major friends to ask why they sent a barrel of vinegar to starving people, and why they sent soft refined sugar from New York when a better article can be bought here for half the price. He said he didn't know what in h—l they could do with vinegar. The people furnishing these supplies have very little idea of the requirements; they would do much better to confine themselves to a few staple articles such as rice, corn, codfish, salt, sugar, and a few canned goods. Many of these can be had here cheaper than in the North, and can be bought as required, instead of waiting weeks to send a steamer cargo. The Major promises to send all the provisions I ask for, for relief work about here, and gave me some vaccine for the people. He said in one place he was looking for some one to distribute supplies and the Cubans told him that every one who was suggested could not be trusted. They were all trying to discredit each other. So he told them he would not give them a d—d thing to eat until they would find and recommend an honest man to take charge. They then got together and recommended a Spaniard. He is a good deal disgusted at the kind of rations laid down by the committee in the North.

Yours affectionately

— NED



SOLEDAD TRANSPORTATION



Major Hysell, of the United States Army, was in charge of Red Cross supplies sent out to Cienfuegos and through him we got supplies for the people in our neighborhood.

During this year of readjustment, Soledad had improved her position by a change of boundaries with Hormiguero, which eliminated any competition for cane and was beneficial to both estates. We added other new land to Soledad by the purchase of Manuel Blanco's interest in Caledonia and by the purchase of San Francisco from Alfredo Vila and his wife. This estate comprised 566 acres which was nearly surrounded by our land. There was some delay about the business, so I went to town to see why Mrs. Vila had not signed the deed. I found she and her husband were at odds and she had changed her mind and would not sign the deed. He wanted me to go and talk to her, which I did. She gave all kinds of excuses, and, after I had overcome one point after another, she said she understood I was very unfriendly toward Cubans! Finally she relented and said she never could forget my kindness in providing for her grandmother up to the time of her death, and she ended by signing the deed and also sold me another property adjoining ours (Limones) greatly to the amusement of her husband, and we parted good friends.

We were flooded with guests the entire winter — army officers, tourists, newspaper correspondents, and American civilians looking for a job. One morning just as we were sitting down to breakfast, two

men arrived. One was the husband of Isabel Torriente, and the other, a relative of the President of Venezuela. They both came from the latter country with a cargo of nine hundred cattle, and all, including the cattle, stopped to breakfast. General Bates came several times, and the more I saw of him the better I liked him. We were very fortunate in our army officers, and in my letters I mention especially Bates, Brereton, Caziaro, and Wright. I went to town often and had many pleasant calls on the officers.

SOLEDAD, *February 14*

Máximo Gómez, who promised to go to Havana, is coming to Cienfuegos to-night. Mr. Smith saw him somewhere up the railroad on Sunday and said all the insurgents of the neighborhood came to the station to meet him, some four hundred and fifty, and only some half a dozen white men. Gómez is, I think, stirring the people up to independence. Smith said that an American military band was sent on the train with Gómez; but in the speeches that were made nothing was said about the Americans, only that the Cubans could have conquered Spain without any assistance from us. At Cienfuegos they gave him a fine breakfast at the theatre, which, after the Cuban custom of being late, was not ready until after two o'clock. General Bates and staff met him at the depot with a band and all marched in a procession, or rather a mob, down to the Plaza. The description given by the officers was very funny. The crowd would have trampled upon General Bates, but the officers punched them with their elbows, tripped them up with their swords, and trod on their spurs. One dignified officer was seen marching with a negress on his arm (so the boys said)

and everything was mixed. The General cautiously admitted the day was rather fatiguing.

On February 25th, the insurgents had a parade and celebration in Cienfuegos. I reached town too late to see the procession, but saw the people and decorations. There were about eight hundred men under arms, all that could be scraped up. The greater part were negroes, and many of them from the town and country were furnished with arms for the occasion. They were a queer-looking lot, but very quiet and orderly. I do not think, however, that they could have done anything more injurious to their cause than to make such a show of their forces before the authorities, both as to quality and quantity. As long as they remained scattered in the country, they claimed several thousand, but they brought in about all they could rake and scrape. An attempt was made to count them, but the estimate of several officers was six to eight hundred.

Yesterday afternoon I drove out to the Sixth Ohio camp to call on the Colonel. It was quite interesting there, and several officers have their wives with them. To-morrow several of the junior officers of the staff are coming up to breakfast with me. They are a nice set of men. General Bates is getting the regulars about him here, and I hope they will let him stay in this Province.

I returned this morning and sent Mr. Hughes in to get a little rest and recreation. He is very popular with the officers and dines with some of them to-night.

March 16

Several of our fleet came in on Monday, and I went to town to see them. I found General Lee, with Captain Sigsbee of the *Maine* (now of the *Texas*), and passed a pleasant hour with them in the evening when

they were by themselves at dinner. I intended inviting them up here, but Ponvert was ahead of me and insisted upon our all going to his place. The ships were open to the public on Tuesday and all the army officers wished to go aboard with their families. I found that Barker, the harbor-master, could not handle the crowd, so I sent him both our boats for the afternoon, while I joined the Hormiguero party, consisting of General Bates and staff, General Lee, Captain Taylor of the *Indiana*, Captain Sigsbee, Colonel MacMahon of the Sixth Ohio, and representatives of the engineers and cavalry, Second. We had a special train and a regimental band, and the two cars were well filled with soldiers and civilians with a lot of young ladies. When we arrived the band played 'Dixie' as Lee left the train, and the party scattered through the garden. We had a fine collation, and everybody enjoyed it immensely. . . . I am told that a marked change in public sentiment has taken place since the Cuban demonstration. Many of the ladies in town saw the insurgents for the first time, and were not favorably impressed with the rank and file — in fact, it was a good object lesson for the public.

The town is full of insurgents and idlers who go about every night followed by a mob crying 'down' with everything that doesn't please them; meanwhile we can't get enough men to run the estates. It is a queer condition of affairs when people go hungry or beg rather than work. The officers here are learning something about these people every day, and there are few who disagree with me.

March 25

I have just learned that the chaplain of the engineers is Sam Small of Georgia, the famous revivalist. He is certainly a shrewd observer; I had a long talk with

him the other day, but did not know then who he was. He is coming up here to see me.

The Volunteer troops are being sent home; more regulars are expected, but do not come. In Havana there have been a number of street fights, and the other night several people were killed and thirty wounded; several of our soldiers have been killed. I hear the soldiers are exasperated and are waiting a chance to sail into the Cubans; many of the officers speak very plainly about affairs here and are very much disgusted.

There are reports to-night of a row at Caunao between some soldiers and the Cubans. The feeling between them is quite strong, and the soldiers are hoping for a chance to get at them before they go home. A spark would start a blaze now that might be hard to put out.

Our troops were withdrawn at the end of March. I think they were sorry to leave, and said if I needed any men to defend the place just to send to Toledo, Ohio. They gave me a hearty cheer as the train pulled out.

All through the winter we had difficulty in securing vessels for the shipment of sugar, but our chief difficulty was in regard to coasting craft. The United States Government, in an effort to protect Cuban coasting trade in the event of Cuban independence, would grant no permits to engage in coasting trade unless the owner and master of such vessels should 'upon oath entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to the King of Spain or to any other foreign prince, State, or sovereignty whatever.' This was all very well in the-

ory, but the pilots of our boats and nearly all other small boats in Cienfuegos were Spaniards, who refused to give up their allegiance to Spain, and it was impossible to replace them by reliable men of Cuban birth. I wrote Captain Walter B. Barker, Captain of the Port of Cienfuegos, asking him to recommend three pilots of Cuban birth capable of handling tugboats and thoroughly trustworthy in the matter of transporting goods and specie to the estates.

He answered: 'I beg to say that I do not know where such men as you desire are to be obtained. If they are to be had in this port, I do not know it.'

I also took the matter up with General Bliss, the Collector of Customs at Havana, and called upon him on my way home.

He said: 'I think you are perfectly right about this order, and I would like to change it, but I have not got the power.'

I then said to him: 'If you will suspend that order until I get to Washington, perhaps I can get it changed.'

'Well,' said he, 'I will do that — suspend it for just a few days; but you must promise you will cable me from Washington just as soon as you have anything definite to say.'

In Washington I went to see Lyman Gage, Secretary of the Treasury, in whose Department the order had originated; and also the Secretary of War, Russell A. Alger. I explained the case to each in

turn, and one sent me back to the other. I kept running back and forth between them for part of a day, and finally convinced Gage that the order was wrong. He sent me to the man who drew the order, and I found an old grey-haired man who must have been eighty years old at least. I explained to him that the Secretaries were willing to have the order redrafted, and I tried to tell him how it should be. He got a pen and a piece of paper. 'Now, Mr. Atkins, you write that yourself just as you want it,' said he, 'and I will recommend it.' Of course, I couldn't ask more than that. He wrote out the order, suspending the whole thing for the time being; then I went back to the two Secretaries, and got their endorsements. On April 29th, I cabled General Bliss: 'Department favors my request and cables instructions General Brooke.'

The suggestion which I made to the Secretary of War was that the present regulations regarding the transfer of such craft to Cuban citizens and to the blue coasting flag be retained, but that the oath required from the masters be so changed that they would not have to renounce allegiance to Spain, but take a simple oath swearing to obey all regulations of the properly constituted authorities of Cuba (namely, the United States Custom-House authorities) during the period for which their licenses were granted. The oath was to be printed in Spanish so that they all could understand it. Citizens of any nationality were to be allowed to serve as masters of craft carrying the blue flag by simply

swearing to obey the regulations of the United States Custom-House authorities.

The general situation of the Island was stated in a letter which I wrote to President McKinley on March 7th:

I have been closely observing conditions here for two months past, and think perhaps you will allow me to give you a few facts as the result of my observations. The conclusions which I have reached are, that the total population of the Island at the present time, in all probability, does not exceed one million; that a majority of these are colored; and that the native white population are a comparatively small minority, those of Spanish birth being next to the colored race in numbers.

The cities and larger towns are very quiet, being occupied by United States troops and under American authority, but the back country towns are entirely under the control of armed insurgents, principally blacks, who are collecting taxes and managing affairs quite independent of other authority. These are less disposed to disarm as time goes on, and less disposed to return to work.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that three fourths of the property interests are in the hands of foreigners, classing the Spaniards as such, and taking into consideration the personal indebtedness of Cuban estate owners. The insurgent independent party (wishing to be rid of American control) represent no property interest as a class, and their control of affairs is equally feared by the Cuban property-holders, Spaniards, and foreigners.

Notwithstanding reports to the contrary, labor is very scarce and it is difficult to obtain men enough to harvest the small sugar crop. The mines at Santiago,

during the past month, have taken between eight hundred and one thousand men from this Province as they could not obtain sufficient there.

Reports from Washington indicate a possibility of the withdrawal of troops in the near future. Should such a course be decided upon, I very much fear that a condition bordering upon anarchy would very soon prevail. It is this fear, which is very general, that leads me to address you at the present time.

CHAPTER XXII

UNDER WOOD'S ADMINISTRATION

DURING the summer of 1899 the command of the Department of Santa Clara was taken over by General James H. Wilson, and combined with the Department of Matanzas. General Wilson was a very interesting man and a gentleman of the old school. He was the man who captured 'Jeff' Davis. General Wilson believed, as did some other American officers, that Cuba should be given its independence at the earliest possible moment.

General Leonard Wood succeeded Brooke as Military Governor of Cuba on December 20, 1899. He had first been appointed Military Commander of the Province of Oriente, where he cleaned up the city of Santiago, and organized the Rural Guards on the lines of the old Civil Guards. This system was later extended to the whole Island. Wood was popular with the Cubans, as he was naturally diplomatic, and he did excellent work both in sanitation and education. He deserves every credit as an executive officer. I met him from time to time, and came to know him very well. At the time of the discussion of the Cuban reciprocity treaty, he was ordered to Washington, and I worked with him there under the general direction of Elihu Root, Secretary of State. He was so well acquainted with Cuba and the Cubans that I always thought

he should have been sent back there instead of Magoon. In the following letter I describe my first meeting with General Wood:

CIENFUEGOS, *January 11, 1900*

DEAR KATE:

I was so busy in Havana that I could not find a minute to write. I called on Wood and after waiting some time he came out and excused himself to the crowd who were waiting and showed me into his private office, where I prepared to say a few words and leave in ten minutes, but he kept me for an hour and a half. He said he had heard about me from President Cleveland and Mr. Olney, and wished to talk with me confidentially, which he proceeded to do, telling me his plans, which in general were quite in accord with my views, although I fear he may find difficulty in carrying them out. Wood resembles Morgan Jones quite strongly, but he has Dr. Worcester's pleasant voice and smile when he is interested. I was well impressed with him, and through what he told me and what Mr. Conant said, who had just come from a conference with Secretary Root, together with what Mr. Porter told me of his conference with the President, I feel that I have as good an idea as is possible to get of the plans here.

I called on General Bliss, General Administrator of the Customs, who was also quite confidential, and I talked with many others who were well posted, including the Reverend Sam Small.

Yours affectionately

NED

I found everything in good shape at Soledad and all waiting to welcome me. Mr. Hughes had married since the last season and had his wife and sister with him. On my birthday, I invited the Hughes

family, Armsby, and Diedenstuke to dinner; Lumelius and Darnell, who were living with me, required no invitation.

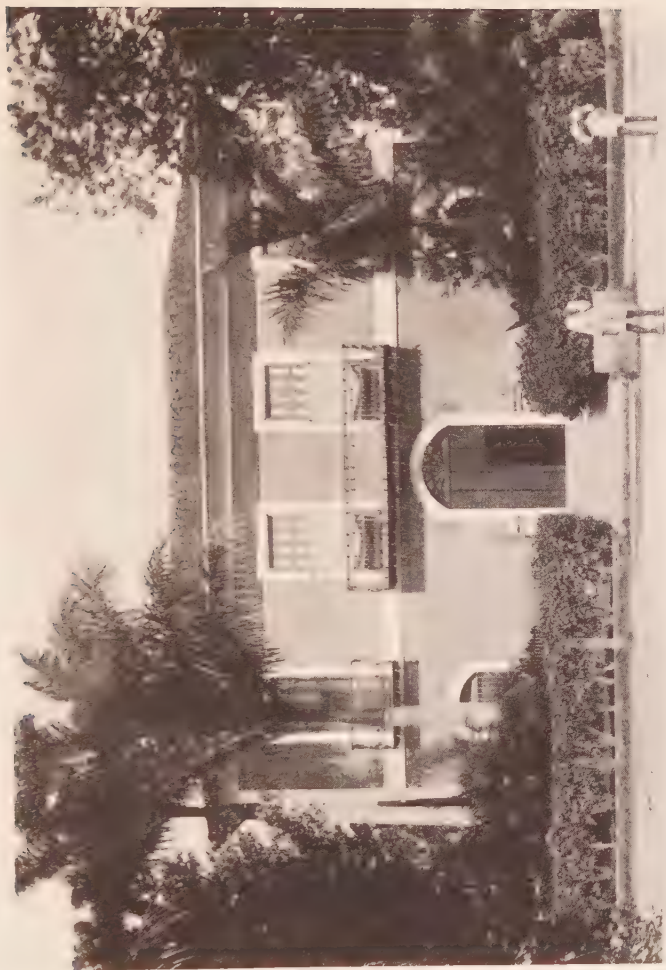
January 14, 1900

DEAR KATE:

My dinner party went off very well last night. I did the table decorations myself and got the best roses and other flowers from the garden; with the new china and plenty of electric lights, the table looked very well. We were nine in all and had a very good dinner. Miss Hughes furnished a plum pudding just out from Wales and made the salad dressing. I got a stock of champagne, and every one was very jolly. The guests all stood while Mr. Hughes proposed my health and many happy returns; then I proposed our wives, sweethearts, and sisters, absent and present, which I guess covered the ground with all of us. After coffee we adjourned to the manager's house and had some music. Mrs. Hughes plays the mandolin; Miss Hughes, the piano, and also sings very well. Darnell plays accompaniments, while Armsby has an exceptionally fine voice. This fellow, while about twenty-five, looks about fifty, as he has a serious expression and wears gold spectacles. He sings the Cuban and Mexican guarachas to perfection without notes, and he speaks Spanish well. He is the boy from Winchester and has made himself useful and popular from the first. I am very pleased with him.

January 18, 1900

I have been out twice to-day inspecting fields and work done since I left. It is hard to realize how immense this place is, and into how many departments it is divided, until one begins the work of general inspection. It requires a full week to see everything, and I am but little over half through yet. Our cattle ranches



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alone constitute quite a business. There are over one thousand head now, exclusive of working oxen, of which there are some hundreds, and I think we have about the best stock on the Island. A dealer who had travelled all over the Island told Mr. Hughes that our working cattle were the finest in Cuba. Most of them were bred on the place.

January 23, 1900

Yesterday afternoon I went to town to meet the Generals (Wood, Lee, Chaffee). As soon as I landed, I met General Lee and Colonel Corliss with Captain Wright and other friends. We all went into Captain Barker's office and had a chat. Mr. Ponvert had come to town to meet me, and we dined together at the hotel. Captain Barker sent us an invitation to join the party on a trip to Pasa Caballo, where the troops are all stationed. So we started on a steam launch about eight o'clock and took General Wood and Chaffee from a transport where they were dining. Chaffee took me aside at once to question me, and we talked all the way down. He seems to have a very good knowledge of the situation, and spoke very plainly regarding it. I did not see Wood until we arrived, when he came and shook hands. Coming back, he gave all his time to me and spoke quite as plainly as did Chaffee, particularly regarding some individuals. He can ask questions faster than I can, and I have some reputation in that line. The camp at Pasa Caballo is very attractive and well laid out. The officers' quarters are very substantial buildings, the roads and walks macadamized, and it has every appearance of being built for a long occupation.

January 26, 1900

Yesterday I had Colonel Corliss, Captain and Mrs. Wright and several others here to breakfast. I invited

the Hughes over, and Miss Hughes cooked the turkey. It was the best we ever had here. I had to carve it, and there was enough for fifteen of us fortunately, thanks to my *skill*. Every one seemed to have a good time. The Colonel brought a photographer, and by and by I will send you the group under the rubber tree.

The trees about the house are growing fast and give the place an air of comfort. I am getting everything cleaned up in all directions, buildings painted, etc., so we really look quite smart. The same fixing up is going on at the plantations, and the place never began to look so well as now.

Yours affectionately

NED

I went to Havana in February to confer with Mr. Porter; and while there I met, in rather different circumstances, Sylvester Scovel, the war correspondent whom I had helped in March, 1896.

HAVANA, *February 10, 1900*

DEAR KATE:

Yesterday morning I met Mr. Porter and Colonel Bliss at the Custom-House and went over the tariff with them. Then I invited them to breakfast at Shay's; the old place is now full of tourists, even women, where only the leading merchants were found before.

Sylvester Scovel invited me, while I was at breakfast, to dinner at his house; also all our party, as some leading officers were to be there. We all accepted, and Bliss came in an army carriage for us. Scovel lives with his wife in a house in Vedado. He is now a contracting engineer. Mrs. Scovel was not present, so I did not see her. The party was composed of General Chaffee, General Humphrey (a delightful old man),

General Sanger, who was in charge of the census, Colonel Bliss, Collector of Customs, General Rathbone, who is Postmaster-General, Captain Lucius Young, Mr. Porter, the Associated Press agent, and myself. Champagne was plentiful and every one was toasted. So many complimentary things were said of me in connection with my experience here, that I had to give a toast to the Army and Navy, and say a few words in connection with the government of the Island, which seemed to meet their views and I think pleased them. Altogether it was a very pleasant affair, and I was glad of the opportunity to meet Wood's officers in a social way, as it brings me into closer touch with them. This morning Mr. Porter gave a breakfast to the same party, and then left for New York.

Yours affectionately

NED

On the boat returning:

February 11, 1900

DEAR KATE:

We are having a beautiful sail down the coast. The weather is delightful and this is much better than the train, now that the boats are cleaned up and no longer crowded. Speaking of cleaning up, there is a most remarkable change everywhere. Havana is really a clean city now, and the private houses of the poorer class are clean like the streets, the people wear cleaner clothes, and I have concluded that cleanliness is catching. All the vice that was formerly so prominent in the older part of the town has disappeared, at least from view, and ladies can go about now without being shocked by former sights. All this has been done by American occupation, but they cannot start the wheels of commerce; everything except the tobacco industry is quite as dead in Havana and elsewhere as in Chelsea. There

is a growing feeling among the negroes against the white Cubans, who, they say, have robbed them of all the spoils of war. Were it not for the restraining influence of the presence of troops, there might be trouble, for I am told they are beginning to organize. This feeling does not prevail against either the Americans or Spaniards as far as I can find; against the Cubans the negroes are very outspoken.

Yours affectionately

NED

Strikes were still continuing in Cienfuegos. The previous year I had taken a hand in settling one of these strikes. The Collector of the Port couldn't do anything, and I went down to the Custom-House and met the mulatto president of the lightermen's union. He knew me, and I asked him what the trouble was. He told me, and I said, 'That is a small matter; now you take my advice, call this strike off and I will get that little concession, but I want you to go to work again.' He used to be a slave in the Jova family when I visited there so much, and when his compañeros came in, he said: 'This strike is settled. Don Eduardo tells me to settle this, and I have known him since he was a boy, and this strike has got to be settled.' They went right back to work, although they didn't stay a great while. But as far as he was concerned, I settled it all with him.

This year we were having the same trouble again. The strike of the lightermen commenced on February 20th. They demanded forty-five dollars a month, American gold, and board. The stevedores

were getting three and a half and four dollars a day, and would not work after 4 P.M. If they were loading a steamer and did not finish at four, they demanded half a day's extra pay, even if they only worked a few minutes overtime. This was the seventh strike within a year. As the merchants did not give in at once, a sympathetic strike was ordered — everybody, cooks, bakers, butchers, and all trades. Most of the Spanish lightermen were willing to work and were satisfied with their wages. They were afraid of the negroes and Cubans who, they said, would kill them if they disobeyed orders or refused to join their associations, and all business was stopped. The merchants wanted me to telegraph Wood, which I did, and he replied that he would give the matter immediate attention. I found the man Gómez, who was president of the labor league, held an office last year under the Government and was discharged by the United States officials for dishonesty. He was then appointed sanitary inspector by the alcalde. It was he who had made all the trouble. The alcalde promised to issue a proclamation calling upon the people to work and promising protection. He did nothing of the kind, however, but one of his police arrested a cartman because he was working and fined him five dollars.

After considering the matter, the strikers decided not to return to work, and I packed up and started to town intending to continue on to Havana if necessary. I sent a second cable to General Wood, for I read in the Havana paper that Wilson had re-

ported to him that the Cienfuegos strike was all settled. When I got to town I found that Captain Barker and Colonel Corliss were with the alcalde. It seems that Captain Barker, who was master of transportation, found he could not move Government goods, and telegraphed to General Wilson, who at that time was apt to favor the Cubans, for permission to call for troops. It must have been a bitter pill for Wilson, but he had to grant permission. This seemed to alarm the alcalde, who promised to bring the strikers to terms. I had very little doubt that the alcalde had been at the bottom of the whole trouble, thinking to gain favor with the working classes and get their votes at the coming election. We held a meeting late in the evening and finally agreed upon a committee to hear the complaints of the lightermen and the strikers agreed to return to work upon former terms. The president of the union was an employee of the city government and I believe he, in turn, was directed by the alcalde. It was a disgraceful state of affairs.

SOLEDAD, *March 1, 1900*

DEAR KATE:

I am thankful to say the strike is well over, for we are filled to bursting with sugar. The alcalde and the president of the labor union have been bounced by Wood. The papers are abusing me in consequence, and I am called the 'incarnate enemy of Cuba.' The alcalde was very angry with me for the part I took during the strike. I hope the new man will do better. There seems a general feeling of relief at the change, and the better class of Cubans are coming to the front.

Some of the stories of the past alcalde's life are surprising, to say the least.

Yours affectionately
NED

Our stream of visitors took up a lot of time; but I thought perhaps they would carry back to the United States new ideas about the Island, and that some day these opinions might be shown or reflected in Washington.

SOLEDAD, *March 23, 1900*

DEAR KATE:

Last night I received a telegram from General Wood, saying that Senators Aldrich, Platt, and Teller would be here Saturday and wanted to meet the representative men here of all classes; that their party consisted of ten and they wanted to come to Soledad; so I am making arrangements to bring them up on Sunday morning and have invited Captain Barker, Colonel Corliss, and Colonel Brown, who is Collector of Customs, also Mr. Ponvert and Mr. Welsh. I shall have two or three steamers to transport them, and shall give them a breakfast here. I wish I had you to help me entertain. There are several ladies in the party.

I heard last night that General Wilson with some others would join the party coming here. All but Senator and Mrs. Teller, and Mr. Ponvert, who was ill, came to the party. The Hughes all came to breakfast, and Miss Hughes with her usual care attended to laying the table, decorating with roses, etc. She had folded the napkins over the rolls with a rosebud on top of each; it couldn't have looked any prettier at the Union Club. We began with cocktails, which no one ever took but every one drank, and wound up with champagne. I can't tell what we had to eat, but they

ate some of everything and seemed to enjoy both their breakfast and their trip. General Wilson was particularly agreeable and wanted me to promise to come and make him a visit at Matanzas. I went back to town with them and we had a further talk last night. Mr. Aldrich and Mr. Platt seem to fully appreciate the situation and Teller shows a good deal of sense about it also. On the whole I am pleased with their visit, although it was too short to get very much idea of the situation.

Yours affectionately

NED

It has been the custom at Soledad for many years to have a dance in the mill at the end of the crop. My next letter tells of one of the first celebrations.

SOLEDAD, *April 13, 1900*

DEAR KATE:

When I reached Factoria yesterday, I found the last train of cane was there waiting for me. The cars and locomotive were decorated with palms and flowers, and as soon as I reached here the men asked me to go down to the sugar house. They had covered mills, engines, and everything with palms, young banana trees, bamboos, and flowers. The effect was very pretty; the electricians had loaded their rooms with flowers and greens and made two arches of incandescent lights. We opened several bottles of champagne at dinner and afterwards all went down to follow the last canes as they went through the mills. The house was brilliant with electric lights; there were several hundred employees there; and all the women on the place dressed in their best. Our artist had drawn two large chalk pictures of me coming and going, the first thin and anxious, the second fat and contented, with a tall hat and carrying two valises filled with doubloons. They



OLD SLAVE BELL



cheered me and I treated them to beer when the engines stopped, with ringing of bells and blowing of all the whistles. I took the first glass with the chief engineer, and the rest were served out of fire buckets. It was quite an occasion. Had you been here, they would have shown *you* first honors. The men were for the most part Spaniards who have long been with us, although there were many Cubans among them. Mr. Hughes provided roast pork, and there was feasting and dancing at all the colonias among the negroes during the night.

Yours affectionately

NED

CHAPTER XXIII

CUBAN ELECTIONS

MUNICIPAL elections were held throughout the Island in June, 1900. On July 25th, President McKinley authorized General Wood, as Military Governor of Cuba, to issue a call for the election of members for a Cuban Constitutional Convention, to frame and adopt a constitution for the Island, and also 'as a part thereof to provide for and agree with the Government of the United States upon the relations to exist between that Government and the Government of Cuba.' The election was held September 15th, and the Convention met on November 5th. On January 21, 1901, the Constitution, as drafted by the Central Committee, was submitted to the Convention. Among other provisions universal suffrage was granted in deference to the numerous illiterates who fought in the insurrection. On February 21st, the Constitution was signed. A Cuban committee was then appointed by the Convention to consider relations with the United States. They made five suggestions. These points were taken up by Senator Orville H. Platt, Chairman of the Committee on Relations with Cuba, who added three more clauses. The whole was submitted as a rider to one of the bills before the United States Congress and was passed on June 12th. This amendment was called the Platt

Amendment and was accepted by the Cubans and embodied in their Constitution. It has been of such importance to both countries that I will give its clauses in full.

*Points adopted February 9 by Cuban Committee
appointed by Cuban Convention*

1. That the Cuban Government should never make any treaty or engagement which would impair its independence nor make any special agreement with any foreign power without the consent of the United States.
2. That it should contract no public debt in excess of the capacity of the ordinary revenues of the Island.
3. That the United States should have the right of intervention for the preservation of Cuban independence and the maintenance of a stable government.
4. That all the acts of the American Military Administration should be validated.
5. And that the United States should be permitted to acquire and to hold naval stations in Cuba at certain points.

Three points added by Senator Platt

1. The Cuban Government should maintain the work of sanitation begun by the United States.
2. The status of the Isle of Pines should be left for future adjustment by treaty.
3. Cuba should embody the amendment in its Constitution and in a permanent treaty with the United States.

This famous Platt Amendment has been variously interpreted both at Washington and Havana; but its language is so simple as not to be misunderstood. I had numerous interviews with Senator

Platt, for whom I had the greatest regard. He was really a statesman and above all the petty political tricks so prevalent in Washington at that time. Senator Platt is well described in Louis A. Coolidge's book entitled 'An Old-Fashioned Senator.'

The transition period between the American Occupation and the establishment of the Cuban Government was a time of great unrest. The methods used by the Cuban politicians were unique. As an instance: In preparing for the first election, General Wood sent for me and asked me to use my influence in support of a very respectable man whom he wished to elect as alcalde of Cienfuegos. I sent for one of the alcaldes de barrio and told him my wishes. He told me to have no anxiety; the man I suggested would be elected. I asked him how he proposed to do it. He said it was a simple matter; they would take possession of the ballot boxes and destroy the ballots of the opposition candidates. I told him that was a magnificent idea and worthy of Tammany Hall. Needless to say, this candidate was elected.

In regard to the election and conditions in Cuba I wrote Mr. Porter:

SOLEDAD, *March 10, 1901*

MY DEAR MR. PORTER:

I suppose you are aware that there are very serious and well-founded charges of fraud and intimidation at the elections which chose the members of this convention, and it is an unquestionable fact that they repre-

sent only the insurgent element of the Cuban people. I am told that the governor of this province telegraphed to Cienfuegos to get up a demonstration sustaining the action of the convention in rejecting the demands of the United States, and these instructions were probably given throughout the Island. Of the people demonstrating at Cienfuegos, a large majority were colored; few of them knew what the demonstration was about, but they were told it was against coal-mining stations. I give you these items in strict confidence, thinking they may be of interest to you and others.

Since I wrote you last, prices of sugars have continued to decline. . . . The New York market is utterly demoralized, owing to pressure to sell sugars which are afloat from all parts of the world. Of course the Puerto Rican and Sandwich Island seller can afford to cut prices, and Cuba is forced to follow. . . . The condition is not a surprise to me. It will continue to grow worse, barring temporary recoveries, until the United States sugar tariff can be changed in regard to the discrimination against this Island (and in favor of Puerto Rico and Hawaii). Meanwhile, all efforts to establish a *stable* government here will be fruitless, as the economic situation will control in the end. A further advance in wages has taken place since the first of March; and although the people here do not fully realize it, Cuban business affairs are fast approaching a crisis. Can you not call the attention of the authorities in Washington to these conditions? I am fully aware that there is no immediate help to be obtained, but plans should be arranged now to give some relief if possible before another year; and the situation should be studied carefully from the view of the political economist rather than from that of the politician.

Yours truly

EDWIN F. ATKINS

Demonstrations against the United States, all planned and ordered from Havana, were held about the country. At Arimao, one Sunday, the alcalde called on all good Cubans to arm. He advised them to buy or steal arms where they could get them, and if the United States did not withdraw its demands, they would burn Arimao and Soledad. The fellow had been discharged from the post-office for stealing and then was appointed to the position of alcalde. He was a fair sample of the class in power.

February 13

We are arranging a man hunt to-night. Several letters demanding money with threats have been received lately (sent to our people, not to me) and it must be stopped. Everybody is receiving such letters and in many places cane is being fired. A company of cavalry is now at Constancia trying to run down the gang there, and a United States officer is now on the way up here; but this business we are looking after ourselves. I think Claudio is in this gang, and would like to catch him. I heard yesterday that the last time the Governor of the Province was here he gave a ball to the demi-monde, which his secretary, the chief of police, and other officials attended; the ex-mayor was also there. How is that for an *official* entertainment in free Cuba? The Collector of Internal Revenue, a Cuban, at Cienfuegos, has just been removed for cause. All these are common occurrences, yet Washington talks of our sacred duty to Cuba.

Claudio Sarria finally was caught and brought in, and I never saw a more frightened negro. He dropped on his knees before me, threw his arms

around my legs and begged for his life, promising to be good in future. I told him he ought to be shot, but that I would spare his life that time. If, however, he was caught on the property again he would be shot on sight by my orders. He quite disappeared, and when Captain Beal inquired about him afterwards from one of the Rural Guards, he was told that Claudio had died of 'rope disease,' meaning that they had hanged him in the woods, where his skeleton was afterwards found.

The restless element did not dare to be very active with American troops on the Island, so matters dragged along without any serious trouble. On October 14, 1901, General Wood issued an order for the holding of a general election on December 31st, for presidential and senatorial electors, members of the House of Representatives, Governors of Provinces or Departments, and members of Provincial Assemblies or Councils; the electoral colleges thus elected to choose on February 24, 1902, President, Vice-President, and Senators. Tomas Estrada Palma was elected President, and Luis Estévez, Vice-President, of the Republic of Cuba.

During the years of 1901 and 1902 we had a constant stream of visitors. American ships came frequently into Cienfuegos Harbor and there was hardly a day when Soledad did not entertain some interesting guests. General Daniel Sickles and a party came into the harbor on a transport and paid a visit to Soledad. With the General was a queer old fellow, a Congressman from Iowa, with his wife and

daughter. They were real country cornfed people. I took the occasion to explain the situation carefully to the Iowa visitor. Mr. Hughes said the daughter remarked to him, 'My, can't Mr. Atkins talk! Papa has just swung right round in his views.' The men said they learned more than they ever knew before, and the ladies said they never had a better time in their lives, so I felt well repaid for my time.

I remember one very amusing breakfast party. One morning in Cienfuegos I met a man and his wife from Cleveland. They said they would like to come up and see Soledad. As they had no introduction, I thought it pure cheek, but after questioning them I concluded they were simple-minded country people and brought them along with me. They had been to Trinidad where an American syndicate (so-called) have bought some worthless lands near the coast and are re-selling to settlers from the West at thirty to forty dollars an acre. These people had invested some three hundred dollars and came out to settle. A half-day there was enough for them, and they were going back to Ohio to denounce the enterprise. I was sorry for the people, who seemed quite respectable and nice. I gave them one good meal at any rate. With them, on the other side of the table, I entertained two Sisters of Charity — one a rosy-cheeked young woman just over from Galicia. They were under orders to eat only the simplest food; but I told them those orders were no good at Soledad, and they

must obey mine while in my house. So I started them with a cocktail and then filled them up with all kinds of food. As I was alone except for the chemist, I soon had my hands full carrying on a conversation in two languages at the same time, one about Ohio and the other about the comparative merits of Galicia and Old Castile. It was wonderful what a cocktail and a full meal combined would produce in the line of conversation. I hope Heaven and the Mother Superior have forgiven my sins.

SOLEDAD, *February 23, 1902*

DEAR KATE:

Yesterday afternoon I went down and made a formal call upon Admiral Higginson on the *Kearsarge*. As our mill was stopped, a lot of our people went with me, and I sent them to see the *Massachusetts* while I was calling. . . . In the evening the ball came off. . . . I have seldom seen a more brilliant scene. The Liceo is a fine large building; it was well-lighted by electricity and hung with flags. The naval officers wore gorgeous uniforms, and there were lots of them, and the army was represented by Colonel Scott and officers from the post with their families. There were dozens of very pretty women and girls from all the best families, among them many Americans. In the patio were two bands. One was the same marine band which was at Nantucket last year. They wore their red coats and white trousers and played all the waltzes, while the Cuban band played the other dances. Champagne flowed like water, and everybody soon caught the enthusiasm, and young and old danced; the captains of the warships, as well as the young lieutenants, hung up their swords and sailed in. Mr. Hughes was one of the

reception committee, and Soledad made a fine showing. I did not know there were so many dress suits on the estate. It was the first time I had taken part in any Cuban celebration since the troubles, and I was overwhelmed with attentions. Colonel Scott, a very dignified officer of some sixty years, did not miss a dance. At two o'clock I was talking with his wife while he went for his hat; and just as he was going the band struck up a waltz and the Colonel dropped his hat and said to Mrs. Scott, 'We will dance just one more.' I was introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Urriate; he was former Spanish Consul-General in New York. Mrs. Urriate said she was very glad to be introduced and wanted to know me, as she had heard so many nice things said about me during the evening. I confess I was both surprised and pleased, as I hardly expected it in that company; it shows the change of sentiment here. They were not saying very nice things a few years ago. The Englishmen connected with the railroad came over from Sagua on a special train. Miss Bennett, who was in Belmont with the teachers, sent for me last night to dance a danzon with her, and I found I could dance it as well as I did a good many years ago. It is a pity you were not here. I envied the men who had their wives with them. . . .

February 26, 1902

Yesterday morning I brought Admiral Higginson up, with Captain McCalla and Captain Bronson, and two or three others. The band played as the Admiral came aboard my 'yacht' and it seemed quite like 'Pinafore.' I am quite sure they all enjoyed their quiet visit after so many formal entertainments. They wanted to see everything and appeared quite like ordinary mortals.

I was thinking to-day what a pity it ~~is~~ that you

cannot be here to meet so many entertaining people. The place is the best known now on the Island and every one of prominence tries to take it in on their trip. Everything is on such a big scale, and life here so different from anything our American people have seen before, or can see elsewhere here, that they all seem interested. Of course there are other factories which turn out more sugar; but few, if any, which cultivate so large an area of cane or do so large a business as all of our various interests combined. It would add to my pleasure if you could share it with me. To-morrow seven visitors are coming. . . . I think of giving up sugar-making and opening a hotel! This will make nineteen visitors this week (two Spaniards here to-night) and two days still left for more who are sure to come.

March 23, 1902

Last night our apothecary was married. Of course I went to the wedding, and afterwards they had a dance. All our people were there, and a very nice-looking set they were — Americans, English, Germans, Spanish, and Cubans, mostly of the latter class. Most of the girls were from town and some of them very pretty. One couple came to me and said, 'Don Eduardo, you came to our wedding last year. We want to show you our baby. We will put it in your school by and by.' There are lots of families here now and all seem happy and contented. Several of the men said last night there was no other estate where the employees were allowed to live with their families, or where the owners did anything for their comfort; that everywhere they were left to shift for themselves as soon as the crop was over. It gives me a sense of responsibility to feel so many people are dependent upon the success of this place.

All the girls on the place are picked up by some of the men as soon as they are of marriageable age, and then they settle down as fixtures. I don't see how I can ever discharge any of them, as all the families are intermarried. You ought to see the crop of kids we are raising and educating, both in school and in the shops. Their parents call them my 'flock' and they come along faster than the colts.

There was a dance at our potrero last night for the opening of the new house; the country people expected it. I could not be at both places, twelve miles apart, so Mr. Gus and Armsby did the honors there. They took a barrel of beer, and some cakes for the girls. They said there were over a hundred people; every girl between the Arimao and San Juan Rivers came, and danced until six this morning. At midnight there was an intermission with a light repast of roast pig, beer, and coffee. They all left on horseback at sunrise, leaving many thanks for the Amo. I hope we have established friendly relations, and that my cattle may be the safer for it.

Yours affectionately

NED

Our school had been most successful and the employees gave a little party one evening in token of appreciation. The school had an exhibition early in the evening. The children recited pieces with complimentary allusions to the Amo and then gave a little play. All were prettily dressed and appeared quite as well as our own public school children at home. The band played the 'Star-Spangled Banner' and everything was very pleasing to me. I opened the ball with one of the prettiest girls, and

they kept up the dancing all night. I left at twelve with the feeling that my educational scheme was a success.

I cannot pass over this period without mention of the founding of the Harvard Botanical Station which has been of great interest to me for many years. At the beginning of this century the sugar industry of Cuba was practically dependent on three or four imported varieties of cane which were propagated solely from stalk cuttings. In this process the planters were likely to be confronted by two serious difficulties; either the plants might degenerate through successive stalk cutting, or they might be attacked by disease. It had been commonly supposed that planting from cane stalks had caused sterility of the flowers, but in 1886 this idea had been proved erroneous in Barbados. In 1900, Dr. George L. Goodale and Professor Oakes Ames visited Soledad and we conceived the idea of improving the sugar cane and making new varieties through cross-breeding. We hoped to produce a hardier race of cane by crossing vigorous types with weaker canes of high sucrose content.

In the winter of 1900-01, I sent Mr. Robert M. Grey to Cuba to study the floral structure and fertility of the cane flowers and to make a report on a suitable location for an experimental station. Limones was selected and work on the garden was commenced in the fall of 1901. The station was called the Harvard Botanical Station and was under

the direction of Hugo Bohnhoff, who was trained at the Harvard Botanical Station at Cambridge. In December, Mr. Grey again visited the estate and brought a large variety of plants and fruit trees from Florida. The work of hybridizing the cane and experimenting with other plants was carried on through the winter. In 1902, all the varieties of Cuban cane were collected at Limones and in addition consignments of cane from Barbados, Demerara, and Java were received. In 1903, Mr. Grey was appointed to take permanent charge of the station. Through years of patient work he has succeeded in raising a large number of seedling canes and our gardens have now one of the largest collections of tropical plants in the western hemisphere.

In 1924 the Harvard Biological Laboratory was established. A house was built and suitable grounds were set aside for the use of scientists who wished to undertake research. This station is administered by a committee of Harvard professors and scholarships are available for Harvard students, who wish to pursue investigations in any branch of tropical biology. Dr. Thomas Barbour has been untiring in his interest in the laboratory and its success will be largely due to his efforts. It is hoped that the work of this Harvard Station will be of real value to the scientific world.

Our pleasant intercourse with United States Army and Navy officers at last came to an end. In May, the Secretary of War began preparations for



LIMONES GARDENS



MR. GREY AND E. F. A. IN EXPERIMENTAL CANE

withdrawing all American officials and forces. On May 20th, the American occupation ended and the transfer of the government to the Cubans was duly accomplished, the American flag lowered, and the Cuban flag raised. General Wood telegraphed President Roosevelt: 'I have the honor to report that, in compliance with instructions received, I have this day, at twelve sharp, transferred to the President and Congress of the Republic of Cuba the government and control of the Island, to be held and exercised by them under the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba.'

CHAPTER XXIV

COMMERCIAL TREATY

THE commercial convention with Cuba was signed by Tasker H. Bliss, Carlos de Zaldo, and José M. Garcia Montes on December 11, 1902. The delay in making a reciprocity treaty had caused great trouble for Cuban planters, and now it became evident that there was to be further delay in the ratification of the treaty. I had made a careful study of the situation and had done considerable work on the treaty. In January, 1902, I stopped in Washington to appear before the Ways and Means Committee. After I gave my testimony the Cuban Planters Association sent a cable endorsing all my statements. As General Wood had recommended a large reduction in the tariff, I hoped that a settlement might be made at once. My desire was not to be fulfilled, however, for, although the United States Senate ratified the treaty with some amendments in March, 1903, it was not until President Roosevelt called a special session of Congress on November 10, 1903, for the express purpose of taking needed action for putting the treaty into operation that the matter was finally settled on December 27, 1903. Under this treaty Cuban sugars entering the United States were granted a preferential tariff of twenty per cent under regular rates and United States imports to Cuba were granted pre-

ferential rates running from twenty to forty per cent. This treaty was made for five years and has since been continued subject to termination upon one year's notice by either party.

The final settlement of the treaty brought relief to Cuban business which had been paralyzed by the long delay. The Spaniards had withdrawn much of their capital, and unsettled conditions prevented new capital from coming into the Island. After the treaty came into operation, business began to revive, although the political outlook was still unsettled. The new Government was confronted with almost insurmountable difficulties, as is shown in the following letters.

CIENFUEGOS, *January 9*

MY DEAR MR. SHAPLEIGH:

There was an election held yesterday for inspectors of the real elections to be held in February. It resulted in numerous fights in which seventeen people were wounded in Cienfuegos and taken to the hospital. I have not heard the results in other places. The voters were intimidated by pistols to vote either for or against special candidates, the officials in power being deadly afraid of losing their positions. I suppose all this will be reported in the papers, and will not create a very good impression in the North.

Yours truly

EDWIN F. ATKINS

Fires were started on Soledad and neighboring estates at various times during the winter. The probable reason seemed to be a desire to make trouble for the new Government.

January 23

MY DEAR MR. McCALL:

. . . Labor, which constitutes practically the cost of sugar production, has already advanced ten per cent over rates paid last year, and the Cuban Government advances taxes wherever possible in order to meet the demands of their salaried officers and employees. In the Municipality of Cienfuegos the employees now number three times what they were under the Spanish régime, and I think this proportion holds good throughout other parts of the Island. Of course Cuba has the advantage of thirty-five cents per hundred pounds over all other foreign countries in United States markets, and this gives her a long lead; but to the casual observer she is no better off and perhaps worse than before the passage of the Reciprocity Act. . . . The Cuban question is not yet settled and will be a thorn in the flesh of our Government for some time to come if I read the signs rightly, as both the financial and political situations are far from satisfactory and attended with much danger.

Yours truly

EDWIN F. ATKINS

In 1905, we received good prices for our sugar and everything went well at Soledad, although there was no improvement in the general political situation.

It was at the end of this year that we secured a hearing before the Spanish Treaty Claims Commission at Washington in order to set forth our claims for losses suffered during the insurrection. My testimony ran through five days. The counsel in behalf of the United States was the Honorable Charles F. Jones, Assistant Attorney-General, and



SOLEDAD MILL, 1906



my counsel was Crammond Kennedy. After my testimony was given, I went over it very carefully with Mr. Kennedy, and one evening, after all was finished, I dropped into his room at the hotel and found him still poring over the evidence which he said read like a novel.

On April 21, 1906, Mr. Hughes was examined in Cienfuegos by a Government lawyer. Our lawyer, La O. Garcia, was away at the time and Mr. Hughes and I had to prepare everything. Two days later the examination was continued at Soledad. The hearing was held upstairs in the vivienda, and when the court was called and we were well at work, Antonio (my boy) appeared with a tray of cocktails, which he held out to the commissioners and lawyers. They all smiled and looked thirsty, but I had to run Tony out in a hurry for fear it would be put in the evidence that I was trying to influence the court. The cocktails were not wasted, however, for the court drank them at the first adjournment. The hearing went on for a week. Mr. Hughes proved an excellent witness. Vilariño, the captain of our guard, gave good testimony; also Cires and Cartaya. Several other witnesses were examined, but to my surprise, the Government lawyer did not question me again after saying he should do so. The commissioners were to return to examine the Government witnesses at Cienfuegos on May 7th. I was sorry they could not finish at once, but, on the whole, considered our hearing quite satisfactory.

I returned home May 12th, leaving the final

hearing of our case in Mr. Hughes's care. On December 24th, I received a telegram from Mr. Kennedy that we had been successful in getting part of our claim, and on March 29, 1907, we received a Treasury warrant for \$62,496.53.

The second presidential election was held in 1906, and President Palma was reëlected. José Miguel Gómez, the defeated Liberal candidate, brought charges of fraud, and at various times several attempts to start uprisings were made; but it was not until August, 1906, that the trouble culminated in a general rebellion. The insurgent leaders issued a decree to the effect that if the Government did not accede to their terms before September 15th, a general destruction of foreign property would be undertaken. Horses and cattle were stolen from Soledad and the estate itself was threatened. It was only the timely arrival of the United States marines that saved the batey from destruction.

On September 12th, President Palma called on the United States for aid, and President Roosevelt sent Secretary Taft and Assistant Secretary Bacon to Havana as special representatives of the Government. By the time they arrived in Havana, thousands of insurgents had gathered a short distance from the city. It seems ridiculous, but an important issue in the second insurrection was the legality of the lottery and of cock-fighting, and many of the insurgents near Havana carried fighting cocks on their saddles. In haste to reach some settlement, Taft issued an order which, when trans-

lated into Spanish, stated that the insurgents could retain their stolen horses for which the Cuban Government would pay the owners. The result of this order was that the insurgents immediately stole more horses. Taft afterwards told me that this order was written in English and translated into Spanish by Funston, who either slipped up on his Spanish or did not comprehend the meaning of the order. It took a long time to get our damages from the Cuban Government for the horses that had been stolen from our estate, and in the end we got only forty dollars for horses that were worth at least two hundred.

The commissioners' conciliatory measures ended in the establishment of a provisional government by the United States and the reoccupation of the Island by the United States Army. On October 13th, the Honorable Charles E. Magoon was appointed Provisional Governor, and officers of the United States Army were detailed as advisers to the acting secretaries of the Cuban Executive Department. General Enoch H. Crowder, our present Ambassador to Cuba, was chairman of the consulting board. Under this American Provisional Government a new electoral law was adopted, and a general election was held in November, 1908. Palma was defeated and the Liberals came in with José Miguel Gómez as President, and Alfredo Zayas as Vice-President. Palma died before the inauguration on January 28, 1909.

At Soledad a company of United States Cavalry,

in command of Captain Henry C. Smithers, took the place of the marines who had come to our assistance, and for two years they were stationed on the estate. Many troops manœuvred in our vicinity, and they usually managed to bring Soledad into their line of march. Sometimes there were two or three hundred men encamped around us. The United States Army and Navy officers were once more our guests and added to the gaiety and interest of our lives. In November, 1909, the Provisional Government was terminated, the troops withdrawn, and the Island once more turned over to the Cubans.



EDWIN F. ATKINS, JR., ON ARAB HORSE



CHAPTER XXV

LATER YEARS

AT the end of the year 1909, I became engrossed in affairs outside of Cuba. On December 28th, at the general request of the bankers and banking institutions as well as bankers and brokers representing stockholders, Mr. Samuel Carr, of Boston, and I were elected to the board of directors for the reorganization of the American Sugar Refining Company. I also served for a time as president of the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company. These duties occupied so much of my time that I was forced to make my winters in Cuba very short. Fortunately, I did not assume active duties with the American Sugar Company until the spring of 1910, and I was able to enjoy one winter with my son Robert, who entered the sugar business in Cuba that year. On our arrival at Havana in January, I wrote home:

Bob seems as much interested as if it were a theatre. Last night I introduced him to a lot of my New York friends, sugar men who are here, and we are now going to see the *Jai-Lai* game. At midnight I was roused up and handed a cable reading, 'Princeton 3, Harvard 0.' This important news cost me half a night's sleep. I handed it to Bob this morning, as nothing would wake him. . . .

I never saw any one more interested than Bob; he is investigating something every moment, in the sugar

house, laboratory, or on the colonias as well as in the office. I think he will learn rapidly.

My son soon learned the business, and was especially interested in Cuba as I had been so many years before. In 1915, he organized the Punta Alegre Sugar Company and I became its president. The factory was built in 1916. In the face of many difficulties my son built up the company and over a period of years many other properties have been acquired and combined with the original company. Although I am the president, my son is the active head of the company and it is through his untiring efforts that it has been a success. The property has now become very extensive and is managed by E. Atkins & Company in New York.

I retired as president of the Westinghouse Electric Company after a year of service and was succeeded by Edwin M. Herr, of Pittsburgh. In 1916, I retired from the American Sugar Company. My second son, Ted, entered the business that year and was deeply interested in everything concerning Soledad. I was now free to spend my time in Cuba and to have my children and grandchildren with me.

Since our children grew up, Mrs. Atkins has been at Soledad once more. She has devoted her time to work among the Soledad people. A number of years ago she sent out to the estate a nurse, Miss Winifred Pingree. Miss Pingree started work under the most difficult conditions, but with Mrs. Atkins's



ROBERT W. ATKINS



EDWIN F. ATKINS, JR.



MR. HUGHES, E. F. A., JR., E. F. A., III, AND E. F. A. IN PATIO OF VIVIENDA

help, her work increased each year, and now families from all parts of the estate are under her care. Mrs. Atkins, assisted by Miss Pingree and my daughter-in-law Mary, has started classes in sewing; teaching the smaller girls to make their own clothes and the older ones to do embroidery. With their embroidery, the Soledad girls are enabled to earn quite a little money and many of them have a rapidly increasing sum in the bank.

I cannot write of Soledad without a last word of my dear friend Mr. Hughes, who has been manager of Soledad for so many years. To him in a large measure is due the success of the estate. Not only is he respected by all, but he is beloved by every one who comes in contact with him. He bears the cares of all upon his shoulders and none but feel free to seek his counsel.

I have now traced my life in Cuba from my first connection with the Island in 1866 to the date when the government was turned over to the Cubans in 1909. As my children will remember the years from 1910, I shall pass hastily over the remaining period of Cuba's history and bring my story to a close.

Cuba's troubles began, almost before Magoon was out of sight, by the wholesale removal of office-holders. There was great indignation among the political factions. The papers said Zayas threatened to resign and a conservative leader advised all conservative members of Congress to leave in a body. Fitness for office received no consideration.

A negro, who was responsible for the murder of a detachment of Rural Guards, was to be President of the Senate. Bills to restore cock-fighting and the national lottery were immediately presented. Meanwhile the Northern papers rejoiced over the restoration of the Republic and proclaimed its stability.

Estrada Palma had accumulated a considerable amount of money in the Cuban Treasury, which was a temptation to the politicians, who wanted it distributed among themselves. With the exception of José Miguel Gómez, the Presidents of Cuba succeeding Palma were not strong enough to prevent this. Gómez, who was practically a dictator, accomplished something for the good of the public in spite of the system of distribution of public funds which assumed such proportions under his administration. This system has largely prevailed up to the present time. There have been many Cubans who have worked for the best interests of their country, but unfortunately they have been in the minority.

In spite of the political situation, Cuba entered upon another period of prosperity, increasing her sugar crop to 2,600,000 tons in 1914, the year of the outbreak of the European war. From 1914 to 1918 the crop increased to 3,400,000 tons stimulated by the demand from Great Britain, France, Italy, and neutral countries; all of which had been deprived of their former supply of German, Austrian, and Russian sugars. With the exception of an attempted

revolt against the existing Government in the eastern province of the Island during the spring of 1917, political affairs have been fairly quiet as has always been the case when economic conditions have been satisfactory and the population employed.

Cuba has benefited in many ways by the supervision of the United States since the Spanish-American War. Through the efforts of the United States Sanitary Commission, yellow fever, malaria, and other tropical diseases have been practically eliminated from the Island. The ever-present threat of military intervention in case of disturbances has made it possible for foreigners, not only to live in Cuba, but also to invest millions of dollars in Cuban industries with comparative safety. The tariff differential on sugars given Cuba by the United States has greatly stimulated the sugar industry and encouraged the investment of American capital. Even before the Spanish-American War, Cuba felt the influence of the United States. Following carefully the rise and fall of sugar production in Cuba for sixty years, it will be seen that the insurrections coincide with the changes in the economic conditions brought about largely by tariff legislation in the United States and the former bounty system, now fortunately abolished.

The Cubans have not, to the present date, 1924, succeeded in establishing a stable government; political parties have been torn by dissensions, and graft has been very prevalent, as has been the case with all the other Spanish-American Republics.

While the revenues have been large, they have been misapplied, and the Government has, upon two or three occasions, been obliged to resort to loans to meet its obligations. Much has recently been said in regard to the favorable financial condition of its Treasury, but those familiar with the situation understand that the accumulations in the Treasury are largely due to the non-payment of its debts, and that the unfunded debt, never accurately reported, now amounts to many millions of dollars which at no distant date must be provided for, probably through increased taxation.

Cuba is a most wonderful country, with great recuperative powers, but her business methods have been very wasteful. Very little attention has been given to public works, education, or sanitation, and with the rapid increase in the world's sugar production, she is again facing sharp competition with other sugar-producing countries, and oversupply of sugar, as with other products, always results in a period of low prices until consumption can overtake production.

The population of Cuba is now estimated as but little over 3,000,000, and her sugar production has now exceeded 4,000,000 tons. The wealth of the Island is very largely in the hands of foreigners, including Spaniards. This class of the population has no vote or voice in the Government, and as upon these foreigners Cuba must largely depend for her taxes, it is becoming a question of taxation without representation.



SOLEDAD MILL, 1925



EMPLOYEES' HOUSES — HARVARD HOUSE IN DISTANCE



FROM DOOR OF VIVIENDA

These people look to the United States for protection of their investments under the terms of the Reciprocity Treaty and the stipulation in regard to loans, and such protection will probably be afforded, but it should be remembered that the Reciprocity Treaty is not a permanent agreement, and may be cancelled upon due notice. The danger will not come from Cuba, but rather from the domestic sugar producers in the United States.

The changes in methods of manufacture and business through which Cuba is passing and the heavy investment of capital required to develop new sugar enterprises are to a great extent eliminating private ownership; while many individual or family interests still remain, they are gradually being absorbed by corporate ownership. The old-time planter is disappearing, and with him many of the interesting customs connected with the earlier history of the Island under Spanish rule.



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